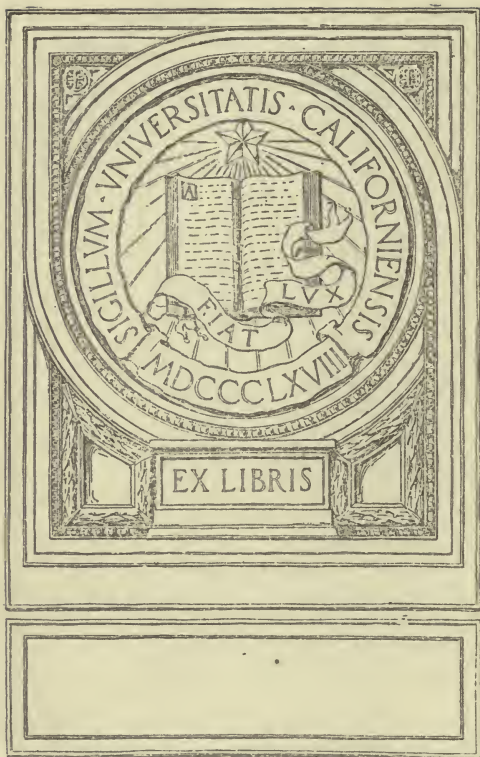


THE NEW NATION



PERCY F. ROWLAND



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John Turner. January 1st, 1911

THE NEW NATION

*When Australia smiles,
When the setting sun beguiles
In a sweet transfiguration
Bush and shanty, plain and station,
And the mountains' dim defiles,
Is there any fairer Nation
When Australia smiles?*

*When Australia sleeps,
When the moon's own mercy sleeps
All the city's uglinesses
In her glamour-soft caresses,
How the splendour creeps
O'er the gum-spread wildernesses,
When Australia sleeps!*

*And what shall be the glory
When Australia wakes?
Outdone the old world's story,
When the new morn breaks!
With eyes worn true with weeping
We watch the white dawn peeping;
Oh, who would then be sleeping
When Australia wakes?*



THE NEW NATION

A SKETCH OF THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND PROSPECTS
OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH

BY

PERCY F. ROWLAND

LATE SCHOLAR OF HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD

LONDON

SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE

1903

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TO THE
HONORABLE

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WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

TO THE PEOPLE
OF
THE NEW NATION AND THE OLD
TWO NATIONS BUT ONE PEOPLE
I DEDICATE
THIS BOOK

P R E F A C E

THE awakening of the newest of the Nations, the Sleeping Beauty among Continents, has been hailed with kindly greetings from all parts of the world. When, on the consummation of the Federal movement, the word Australia ceased to be a term of geographical expedience, and for the first time took on a political meaning, not only England, but the Republics of America and of France, and the sister Dominion of Canada, were warm in their approval of the young Commonwealth which had decided to adopt a constitution in so many ways resembling their own.

In England the interest in Australia was sensibly quickened by the part that her troopers played in the South African war, and it was widely anticipated that the conference of colonial premiers in 1902 would utilize the strong flame of imperial feeling kindled by that war, to weld the Commonwealth, together with the Dominion,

the States of South Africa, and the other portions of the Empire, into an indissoluble union with the mother-country. The strong incipient feelings of nationality shewn in the attitude of Sir Edmund Barton and Sir Wilfrid Laurier were the real reason why no very tangible result was attained.

But England's interest in Australia is in no way lessened because the daughter state already feels the dignity of nationhood. Whether Australia ultimately elects to become an independent Commonwealth, or prefers to share the dangers and privileges of association with the little northern island that gave her birth (and I have endeavoured to shew that either alternative is compatible with noble ideals), it is certain that meanwhile the more Australia knows of England and England knows of Australia, the better it will be not only for England and Australia, but for the whole Empire, and for the world in which that Empire still seems the most vital force.

It has been the object of the writer, strongly holding this belief, to afford to those who have not visited it a candid and impartial account of the young Commonwealth,—the kind of account that he himself endeavoured, but failed, to obtain before he set out for what remains to most Englishmen

an unknown land. He wishes it understood that any views here set down, are set down with the utmost diffidence, and the most complete admission that a man's impressions of a country and a people depend vastly on his circumstances and on the 'divine accident' of friends. But he can at least claim that this book, however inadequate, honestly, without malice and without extenuation, records Australia as it appears to him after seven years' collection, and careful correction, of impressions.

I have heartily to thank my friends, Mr. T. R. Bavin, Mr. S. McDougall, and Mr. H. S. Nicholas, for arguments and suggestions while I was writing the book in Sydney,* and Dr. Hastings Rashdall for adding to many kindnesses since I was privileged to read under him for the School of *Literae Humaniores*, the acceptance of two of my chapters as articles for the *Economic Review*.

I have also to acknowledge the courtesy of the proprietors of the *Nineteenth Century*, *Macmillan's Magazine*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, for allowing

* The book was written in Sydney in 1901; and additions were made in England during revision (June, 1902) and in correcting proofs (October, 1902, to January, 1903). It has, of course, been impossible to bring all facts and figures fully up to date; but an attempt has been made to leave no important recent fact unnoticed.

me to use such portions of the book as were first printed in those periodicals.*

To my authorities acknowledgments are made in the text. But I should like here to make special mention of Mr. Coghlan's invaluable *Seven Colonies*, and Messrs. Quick and Garran's eruditely *Annotated Constitution*.†

PERCY F. ROWLAND.

THE SCHOOL LODGE,
ABINGDON,

January 30th, 1903.

* The *Plea for English Literature in Primary Schools* first appeared in *United Australia*; and the initial verses, in the *Sydney Bulletin*. I must plead distance as an excuse for not having asked permission of these papers to reprint; but I have every reason for believing that it would in neither case have been refused.

† The absence of this latter work (though published two years since) from the British Museum Reading-Room, has prevented me from being able to ascertain the full extent of my indebtedness in Chapter VI. I mention this partly to apologize for a possible lack of due inverted commas, partly for the sake of future Readers; but in no way to depreciate the competence and courtesy of the management of the famous Reading-Room, to whose generous hospitality all students are indebted.

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THE NEW NATION

CHAPTER I

THE CONVICT SETTLEMENT—THE FIRST PROCONSULS

UNACKNOWLEDGED heroism, unvalued self-sacrifice, unrewarded toil, have been the lot of many servants and preservers of the Empire ; but perhaps Fate has dealt with none more hardly than with the founders of Australia, zealously forgotten in the country of their adoption, all but unknown in the country of their birth.

Yet not the most illustrious of our warrior-statesmen had harder tasks set before them, nor manifested a finer spirit in grappling with them, than that little band of obscure governors of New South Wales, to whom Australia owes her origin, and England the most interesting and progressive of her colonies ; a Southern empire destined to compensate her in some measure for the great Western colonies that a headstrong king and foolish ministers lost her for ever.

It was at the beginning of 1788 that Captain

Phillip landed, with his thousand convicts and marines,* among the low, gum-spread hills of what is now the great city of Sydney. Around him stretched limitless desolation; on the one hand the sail-less ocean, on the other an unexplored continent, infested with savages, plagued with reptiles, palsied with heat. Before him and his successors was set the heroic task of civilizing this gigantic wilderness. And with what instruments! What might have taxed the powers of the wisest, with the eager assistance of competent colonists, Phillip had to accomplish with the unwilling aid of outcasts.

He was only just in time. Already other European nations turned wandering eyes towards the island-continent: England only just anticipated France in Australia, as well as in New Zealand. Eighteen years had passed since New South Wales had been discovered by Cook, and nothing had been done towards its occupation. There can be little doubt that if Governor Phillip and his convict colonists had not in the nick of time come sailing into the blue waters of Botany Bay, the English people, if they colonized Australia at all, must have shared it, as they have been obliged to share South Africa, with men of other races; and the infant Commonwealth would never have

* He brought 564 male and 192 female convicts, 178 marines, and 40 women; scarcely an ideal nucleus for a great colony.

been cradled in the unique distinction of unbroken peace.

A merciful ordinance in human affairs brings good from evil, youth from decay, fragrance from corruption; and it is better a thousand times that England should have won Australia through transportation, barbarous system as it was, than that England should have lost her chance of colonizing the 'Golden Continent.' We may, indeed, regret that Matra's suggestion proved impossible; could it have been adopted, Australia would have looked for fathers of the state, not to men, who, whether guilty or not, were at least stained with the criminal stigma and bruised with the criminal's fate, but to American loyalists, who chose rather to leave their homes for an unknown land than live beneath any but the English flag.* As it is, we must remember that Australia is not alone among nations, nor was she the first among colonies, to derive a portion of the stock of her inhabitants from convicted criminals.† For a hundred and fifty years before the foundation of Sydney transportation had regularly taken place from England to the American colonies. It was, in fact, only the loss of America to England as a

* For Matra's scheme, and the reasons of its non-adoption, *vide* A. W. JOSE : *Short History of Australasia*, p. 13.

† We find the first germs of the transportation system in the Vagrancy Act of Elizabeth, which empowered justices to direct the transportation of vagrants. A letter of James I.'s, in 1619, directs "100 dissolute persons" to be sent to Virginia, and from that time large shipments were frequently despatched.

receptacle for convicts that caused English statesmen to think seriously of Australia, and to send Phillip to translate their thoughts into history.

Phillip's first action was to change the location of the proposed settlement from Botany Bay to a sheltered cove some miles further along the coast, named, but not explored, by Captain Cook, and immediately hailed by Phillip as the "finest harbour in the world."

But before he could transfer the settlers thither, Phillip received a visit from two French ships in search of drinking-water. La Perouse, the commander, gave Captain Phillip some despatches to be sent on to the French Government, and then, sailing away, was seen of men no more.

A death even worse than the shipwreck that was presumably the Frenchman's fate, now threatened Phillip and his convict colonists. Misled by accounts in Cook's *Voyages* of the land's fertility, Phillip had relied on being able to raise sufficient corn for the sustenance of the colony. But the soil about Sydney Cove proved poor, and the attempts at wheat-growing met with failure. Starvation was just beginning to assert itself as a hideous possibility,—for the stores with which Phillip's foresight had provided them, largely depleted during their eight months' voyage, were fast running short,—when the settlers were horrified to find that a fresh batch of convicts, which now arrived, was unprovided with any stores at all.

It had been to Dutchmen, driven out of their course to Java, that Australia on its western coasts was first known: hence the Dutch names along the west, records of many a storm; hence, too, the continent's first name, "New Holland." It was to Dutch colonists in Java that the Australian settlers now turned in their distress.*

One of the small vessels that composed the fleet,—and in these days of twelve-thousand-ton Australian liners it is interesting to recall the fact that none exceeded four hundred and fifty tons,—was sent to Java for food, another being despatched to Cape Colony on the same urgent mission.

Meanwhile the settlers were put on short allowance, the governor characteristically refusing to fare better than his convict fellow-colonists. Of these, two hundred were drafted off to Norfolk Island, where Lieutenant King had succeeded in growing a crop of wheat.

At length three store-ships appeared. But in their wake came fresh contingents of convicts, so ill-conveyed that out of one batch of seventeen hundred more than two hundred died on the voyage; and Phillip had an heroic task before him in feeding and maintaining discipline among so many discontented desperadoes. He rose to the

* It is curious to notice that, by a similar irony of history to that which set America in conflict with the land of her discoverer, it is through Dutch colonists that Australians were recently afforded their first opportunity of trying their mettle in war.

task like a hero. He discovered good land for farming at the head of what is now called the Parramatta River, and founded the agricultural settlement of Rosehill, where, before he retired, over sixty farmers were cultivating their own estates. He wrote home for free settlers, especially farmers and skilled mechanics;* he explored the surrounding country, and did his best to conciliate the unfriendly blacks. And when, in 1792, he obtained the authorities' reluctant permission to return home, he had the satisfaction of knowing that, largely through his untiring efforts, the colony had at length taken firm root.†

Yet the plant wanted careful tending. Succeeding governors found their task no sinecure. Not only was there the never-sleeping danger of a

* Although these were at first few in number, they increased very rapidly before many years; and in view of the thousands of free colonists from the time of the gold discoveries onward, and the interchange of population between the Australasian colonies, it may be doubted whether any much larger proportion of Australians than of Englishmen are of criminal ancestry, or whether that proportion is notably larger in New South Wales than in any of the other colonies.

† "For five years Governor Phillip fought his battle against convicts, black men, recusant settlers, famine, floods, and drought; and he fought it like a hero. . . . I do not know where to look for a better story of great, continued, unpicturesque heroism, than in the records of Governor Phillip's career."—A. TROLLOPE.

With Phillip's name as founder of Australia should be associated that of Sir Joseph Banks, botanist in Cook's first voyage, who interested himself in the colony from the first, advised the governors, and helped the colonists with gifts of sheep and plants.

convict revolt, but the soldiers of the New South Wales corps, sent out at Phillip's request in exchange for his marines, had to be restrained from enriching themselves by the exorbitant profits of the liquor-trade. Banished to the very edge of the empire, eight months from civilization, it was the one object of the majority of the regiment to get rich as soon as possible, and so reach home once more. To this end the rum-traffic offered the readiest means. Officers who had left their consciences in England, not only imported large stores of alcohol and sold at gigantic profits, but set up illicit stills and spread corruption and disease throughout the colony.

Is it not, rightly considered, one of the most amazing facts of history, and one of the most hopeful auguries for those who refuse to be discouraged in their visions for humanity 'in the fulness of the days,' that this little settlement of criminal outcasts, dominated by soldiers scarcely less outcast, and often far more criminal,—this seething hotbed of vice, disease, and despair, planted on a barren coast of an unknown continent, has now become,—thanks to a few just men at the top, thanks to favouring circumstances, thanks (may we not also be bold to add?) to the ineradicable goodness of human nature,—among the healthiest, ablest, best-conducted, soundest-hearted communities under the British flag? The best answer to Ibsen's *Ghosts* is Phillip's Australia.

It wanted courage and conscience to check the liquor-trade. Opposed alike by convicts and by soldiers, Governors King and Bligh both set their faces against the iniquitous abuse of power. It cost the one years of toil and persistent worry; the other disgrace and ultimate recall.

The incident that directly led to Governor Bligh's dismissal is not without a stormy picturesqueness, fortunately absent from more recent pages of colonial history. Macarthur, a prominent and masterful settler, whose name has become famous in connection with the growth of the wool industry, took sides with the military rum-sellers, picked a quarrel with the governor, and, refusing to obey an order of the Supreme Court, incited Major Johnston to imprison his Excellency and initiate a dictatorship in the interests of the corps. In due course the Home Government cashiered Johnston, but recalled Bligh in favour of Governor Macquarie.

The new governor had problems to face as serious as those of Phillip. Although the rougher convicts, determined at all costs to 'kick against the pricks,' as much a foe to themselves as to all the world, were subjected to treatment severe to brutality, those more amenable to discipline had been allowed from the first to be hired out to work for free settlers, and, on the expiry of their sentences, to acquire farms of their own. Land which is now worth thousands of pounds, in the

heart of the most prosperous of Australian cities, was given in huge blocks to time-expired criminals. Macquarie's main difficulty was to defend the interests of such ex-convicts,—emancipists, as they were called,—against the free settlers, who, galled at their mere existence, were for excluding them from all political and social possibilities. There is something in the English spirit antagonistic to the caste system, and Macquarie undoubtedly adopted the right attitude, if we look to the ultimate interests of the colony and the empire. He was not without his complement of faults,—an undue vanity that has peppered his name over Sydney streets and buildings, an excessive credulity which made him the dupe of every plausible convict. Nevertheless, the work he did for Australia in a governorship of eleven years (1810-1821) ranks only second to the great pioneering work of Phillip: Australia wanted her Alfred as well as her Hengist and Horsa.

Macquarie's energy found outlet in various ways, all in varying degrees beneficent. He did his utmost to encourage exploration and extend the lines of settlement, himself travelling throughout the explored parts of New South Wales and personally assisting settlers, ex-convict or free,—he recognized no difference,—to found comfortable homes and carve out prosperous careers.

Under his auspices the Blue Mountains were first traversed, and the great western table-lands

spread with settlers' cottages. First of Australian governors he saw,—what not even the flames of religious and political animosity can make the English people see,—the vital importance of efficient education. Wherever possible, he established schools, while his wife seconded his efforts by endeavouring to ameliorate the not too felicitous lot of the women of the settlement. Above all, Macquarie did good work towards the realization of Phillip's idea that New South Wales was to be a colony, not primarily a penal settlement. The material he had in hand, rejected by the builders, he firmly resolved to make the cornerstone of a nation.

Autocratic and extravagant, Macquarie had ultimately to submit his administration to a searching inquiry by a special Imperial Commissioner, and his successors were directed to carry out reforms on the lines of the Commissioner's report. But, although he severely criticized Macquarie's emancipist policy, the Commissioner could not withhold high praise for much of the administration of the most energetic, humane, and broad-minded of Australian proconsuls.

With Macquarie ends the series of despotic governors. He and his predecessors had indeed done much. Already, less than half a century since Phillip's starving convicts had deplored the fate that had brought them, as it seemed, to perish in the wilderness, a mighty transformation had been

wrought. A continent had been added to the English dominions ; hundreds of settlers, freed or free, were subduing Nature by obeying her ; misery was giving place to hope, privation to prosperity ; the radical criminal amazedly watched himself transforming to a conservative landowner.

The need of the firm hand of the autocratic ruler was henceforward to grow less. But the very zeal with which the colonists were now about to strive for a greater share in the government, shews how well those early governors had done their work. The defects of the convict system, deftly done in deep black to take the public eye, are too apt to dazzle us from the heavy debt owed by England and the world,—most of all by Australia,—to the early governors of New South Wales, proconsuls of a forlorn hope, pioneers of an undiscovered empire, who, exiles from all that can be meant by home, worked at their slow task with a heroism beyond praise, and triumphed over difficulties beyond belief.

CHAPTER II

THE INFANT COLONIES—EDWARD GIBBON WAKEFIELD —THE BEGINNINGS OF INDEPENDENCE

IN no small measure through the tact and ability of its first governors, New South Wales had, in the opinion of the Home authorities, justified its title to be no longer primarily a convict settlement, with a despotic ruler at the head, but a free colony, fit to be gradually entrusted with the privileges and responsibilities of self-government. The instalment of liberty granted by the Constitution Act of 1823 was no doubt in itself but small; the appointment of a small advisory Council, and the abolition of the old military courts in favour of a Supreme Court, were, however, the germs, and were intended to be the germs, from which complete self-government has been gradually evolved.

The Act of 1823, then, deserves to be looked upon as the Magna Carta of Australia. Fortunate, uniquely fortunate, in many ways as Australia has been, she won even her Magna Carta without a struggle.

Besides constituting the Supreme Court and the Council, the Act of 1823 first separated Van Diemen's Land from New South Wales. This fair and fertile island, discovered by Tasman in 1632, (whence, of course, its modern name, Tasmania), was, until 1798, supposed to be part of the mainland. In 1803, partly to anticipate the French (for Baudin had recently visited it), partly to relieve the convict station at Sydney Cove, Lieutenant Bowen with twenty-four convicts, twelve soldiers, ten women, and three children, was sent to found a settlement. Fresh accessions to the population, convict and free, were not long in arriving; and when Governor Macquarie, in 1821, visited the island on his way home to England, he found two thousand seven hundred persons settled in Hobart Town and the neighbourhood, and estimated the entire population to approach eight thousand.

The effect of separation from New South Wales was at first to make the government more despotic. Under a lieutenant-governor, subordinate to the governor of New South Wales, a firm rule was difficult. Thus when Davey, in 1816, in despair at the success of ex-convict bushrangers, put the whole island under military discipline, Macquarie promptly vetoed the drastic measure. Governor Arthur, however, coming into office on the eve of separation, could act independently without fear of interference either from England or from New South Wales. He certainly made the best

of his opportunity. The blacks were all but exterminated, the bushrangers punished, while the convicts were classified, the worst being separated from the rest, and subjected to the severest discipline,—discipline so severe as sometimes to defeat its own end.

Arthur's successor, Franklin, is chiefly remembered for his zeal for education, for science, and for religion. The mild rule of this Australian Edgar, (with Secretary Maconochie for his Dunstan) brings us to the year 1843.

Meanwhile two interesting attempts at free colonization had taken place on the mainland. Western Australia had already been occupied by a few convict parties in Governor Darling's time, and in 1829 the British authorities were at length induced to send Captain Fremantle formally to annex "all that part of New Holland * which is not included within the territory of New South Wales." Exaggerated accounts had been brought home of the Swan River district, and a Mr. Peel organized a colonization scheme which does more credit to his enterprise than to the wisdom of the British Government in lending it support. All colonists arriving in 1829 and 1830 at this unearthly paradise were to be granted freehold land in proportion to the amount of property brought with them, at the

* The name Australia was not in common use till about 1850. For the history of the word, *vide* the late Prof. Morris' *Austral English*; *sub voc.*

rate of one acre for every eighteenpence, in money or goods, possessed,—those first come to be first served with land. That blessed word ‘freehold’ brought out hundreds of most unsuitable immigrants from England—delicately reared men and women, expecting the idyllic existence of a patriarchal landowner, to sit down beneath the shadow of their vines, while the hum of their labourers reached them on balmy breezes from conveniently distant fields. By June, 1830, more than a million acres had been applied for; more than a thousand settlers arrived, with more than £100,000 worth of capital.

But if the

“Best-laid schemes o’ mice and men
Gang aft a-gley,”

what of the worst? The climate was hot, the land was poor; the labourers deserted; the sheep, misled by poisonous scrub, perished in hundreds. Those of the colonists who, with English determination, refused to accept defeat at the hands of Nature, were many of them massacred by the fierce western tribes of aborigines. Those who escaped gradually conformed themselves to their altered surroundings, and for a time the settlement appeared to “progress with a slow, yeomanlike steadfastness;” but a period of severe depression in 1850 impelled the struggling settlers to request the Home Government to grant them the graceless grace of convict labour, and

thus confess that the attempt to found a free colony in West Australia had been a failure.

The colonization of South Australia brings us to a name so prominent in the history of Greater Britain, that even a sketch as brief as this must admit a few lines of digression. Born of a respected northern English family, which had been long associated with philanthropic enterprise, Edward Gibbon Wakefield at twenty startled the neighbourhood by eloping with an heiress in her early 'teens. The girl was a ward in Chancery; and it was only by influence and great good fortune that the young adventurer avoided punishment.

After a few years of happy married life, Mrs. Wakefield died. Wakefield lived for some years as a widower, a devoted father to the two children she had left him. Then, apparently convinced that for the great schemes that filled his mind capital was necessary, and equally convinced by experience that the pleasantest means of acquiring capital was by the abduction of heiresses, he induced the head-mistress of a local girls' school to grant Miss Turner, one of her pupils, leave of absence to visit a dying father. When the young heiress was safely in the carriage, she found that it was not at a funeral, but at a wedding that her presence was required. She appears to have raised no objection; for indeed Wakefield was an accomplished and handsome gentleman, and she

a romantic schoolgirl, reared on Mrs. Radcliffe. Overtaken, however, by infuriated relatives, the young couple were separated by the law. Miss Turner subsequently made an advantageous match, and died many years later in comfortable respectability.

Wakefield, and a brother who was concerned with him in the matter, were sentenced to Newgate. The three years Wakefield spent in Newgate were as important in the history of colonization as was Bunyan's weary sojourn in Bedford gaol to English piety and literature. The romantic Eliza Turner was indirectly not only, as Dr. Garnett shews, the renovatress of the British Museum, but also the foundress of South Australia and of the richest province of New Zealand.*

Prison life, his own early training as a land-surveyor, and the news that filtered to England of the failure in West Australia, turned Wakefield's genius in the direction of colonization. In an imaginary *Letter from Sydney*, and in the maturer *Art of Colonization*, he promulgated his four epoch-making propositions :—

(1) That transportation must cease; "a mode of colonization that the theorists of 1830 regarded with the same abhorrence as all the world would

* Verily, the old poet was right :—

"A whetstone is no carving instrument,
And yet it maketh sharpe kerving tolis."

Troilus and Creseide.

feel towards a proposal from France to pour her convicts into England or Germany."

(2) That the government of colonies must be free from interference by England.

(3) That colonization should be a deliberate national act by which England should plant strong and healthy New Englands in favourable soils; not a chance extrusion of surplus paupers, the rubbish of humanity, to live or die anywhere out of reach of English eyes and noses.

(4) That the money to be spent in securing suitable emigrants, and in making provision for the education and religious instruction of the colony, should be obtained by selling the land at a reasonable, or, as he said, a 'sufficient' price.

With these ideas he founded, in 1830, the 'Colonization Society,' determining to put his principles into practice at the earliest opportunity. Amazingly expert at the management of men,* Wakefield was not long in seeing his thoughts

* "For many years," says Mr. Reeves, "he had to work masked,—had to pour forth his views in anonymous tracts and letters, had to make pawns of dull men with respectable names. . . . All things to all men, plausible to the old, magnetic to the young, persuasive among the intellectual, impressive to the weak-minded, Gibbon Wakefield was always more than the mere clever selfish schemer which many thought him. Just as his fresh face and bluff English manner concealed the subtle mind ever spinning webs and weaving plans, so, behind and above all his plots and dodging, was the high dream and ideal to which he was faithful, and which redeemed his life" (*Long White Cloud*, pp. 167, 168).

perpetuated in history. In 1831 the British Government adopted his principle of the sale of lands and the use of the money thus obtained for assisting emigration.* Wakefield's society, encouraged at this, determined to found a colony in South Australia, then a nameless desert vaguely known through Sturt's discoveries. Owing to the political features of the Wakefield scheme, the Colonial Office refused a charter of incorporation. Thus the first body of intending South Australian colonists was broken up, many of them finding a haven in all-receiving America. Realizing the cause of the refusal of a charter, Wakefield, in his *England and America*, jettisoned the political clauses; and at length had the satisfaction of seeing a South Australian Bill pass the Commons and make its way into the Lords. Here, Wakefield tells us, it was greeted by a prince of the blood with the question, "Where *is* South Australia?" To which the Lord Chancellor, renowned for the surpassing extent and variety of

* "A change was proposed," wrote Wakefield, some years later, "which would be a perfect revolution in the most important function of colonial government. . . . The very few persons who at that time desired this change were obscure and feeble; and yet, all of a sudden, without inquiry by Parliament or the Executive Government, without a word of notice to those most concerned, and without observation from anybody, out came an imperial decree, by which, in the principal colonies of England, the plan of selling waste land was completely substituted for that of free grants."

his knowledge, replied :—"Somewhere near Botany Bay." The Bill did not commend itself to their lordships, and was in danger of rejection. But the colonial enthusiasts approached the Duke of Wellington, and explained their scheme to him. "*The experiment*," he declared, "*ought to be tried*;" and through his personal influence the Bill became law. Gratitude for this service was to have given the name of Wellington to the South Australian capital, had not other influences prevailed, and left that honour for New Zealand.

Wakefield himself was busy with other schemes,—organizing a New Zealand Association for the settlement of Canterbury, writing in the *Spectator* against the transportation system, going to Canada as secretary to Lord Durham, and helping him devise a scheme of self-government for that great colony. But in July, 1836, his South Australian efforts found partial fruition in the landing on Kangaroo Island of the first batch of settlers. Captain Hindmarsh arrived as governor in December, and fixed the capital on its present site. Unfortunately for the young colony, Hindmarsh was conspicuously incompetent, and quarrelled with all his subordinate officials. Moreover, the price fixed for the land, though 'sufficient' to keep artisans from buying it, was not sufficient to prevent speculators from riotously gambling in it, and bringing the whole system into disrepute. Gawler, who succeeded, found, in

1838, the population 3680, the debts of the colony £16,580, the revenue £1148, and the people, instead of developing the country, overcrowding the town. Governor Gawler did his utmost for the colony; under him the population was doubled, sheep increased sevenfold, cultivation thirtyfold. But this cost money; the relief works he established were especially extravagant, and kept the labourers from cultivating the country. The Colonial Office had not Gawler's confidence in the future of the colony, and ignominiously dishonoured his bills. He was recalled in 1841, having spent his whole fortune in the colony; and his place was taken by Captain George Grey, who vigorously set to work at the unpopular task of retrenchment, and soon saw the colony, after some monetary help from England, on its way to prosperity.

So far as the colonization of South Australia in its early years may be said to have been a failure, it is by no means clear that such failure was due to the Wakefield doctrine of the 'sufficient price.' Influenced by juster views of the duty of a community to its members, a modern colony would probably alienate as little land as possible. But to alienate the land for £1 an acre was at least better than to give it away for nothing; and had this regulation been backed up by wise administration, early South Australian history would have been very different reading. It has yet to be proved that, had the 'sufficient price' clause been

absent, the enormous difficulties of founding the colony would have been any less. It is at least significant that South Australia and New Zealand, the only two colonies in which the doctrine was given anything approaching a fair trial, were the only two colonies which grew to maturity without the insidious aid of convict labour.

But even if it be admitted (and I, at least, am far from admitting it) that the 'sufficient price' doctrine was a retrograde, and not a progressive measure, nothing could be more absurd than to base on this a condemnation of Wakefield's colonizing work. Wakefield found colonization at its lowest ebb. "Our colonies," he makes the statesman say in his *Art of Colonization*, "cost us money, much trouble, and not a little shame, without rendering any important service to us in return." And there is no doubt that this faithfully represents contemporary public opinion. What wonder, then, if, as Wakefield says elsewhere, the "lively interest" professed by English statesmen in colonization "somewhat resembled the interest which a parrot feels in your health when it says in a tone of tender anxiety, 'How do you do?'"

Wakefield changed all that. From him dates a worthier conception of what colonization means; henceforward men of brains, men of family, men of wealth, were glad to seek a colonial career, and find scope for their energy which the old country could not offer.

"The emigration to Port Phillip, South Australia, and New Zealand," wrote Buller, "has been an emigration of every class, with capital in due proportion to labourers. . . . To such settlements men of birth and refinement are tempted to emigrate. . . . I will be bound to say that more men of family have settled in New Zealand since 1840 than in British North America in the first thirty years of the present century. . . . This change in the character of colonization, this great change in the estimation in which it is held, is of greater moment than the mere provision of means for conducting emigration without cost to the public. *It makes colonization an extension of civilized society.*"

If, at the present day, the colonies are associations of free men, not dumping-grounds for criminals; if they are self-governing communities under the Crown, not jealous republics outside it; if, finally, they are prosperous, intelligent, and self-respecting, instead of bankrupt in resource and character, it is in no small measure due to him who has been called, not unjustifiably, the father of English colonization.

A further measure of self-government was one of the ways in which the new English feeling towards the colonies manifested itself. But England naturally insisted that no further transportation should take place to any colony which aspired to self-rule. There was some hesitancy in New South Wales. "How," asked the timorous, "could they

get on without the cheap labour supplied by transportation?" But the townsfolk forced the hand of the squatters, and in 1842 a new Constitution was duly granted, lessening the power of the governor, and making the Council consist of twelve nominated and twenty-four elected members.

The colony of Victoria had been colonized and had grown up as part of New South Wales. After some years of agitation, separate government was granted in 1850, a Council being constituted similar in composition to that of New South Wales.

In the same year self-government was granted to South Australia and to Tasmania, transportation to the latter colony being abolished two years later.

A like system of self-government was granted to Queensland on its separation in 1859 from New South Wales, and Sir George Bowen went out as its first governor.

Western Australia did not abolish convictism until 1868, upon which it also was granted a two-thirds elective Council.

I have thus briefly sketched the history of the Australian colonies until each has gone well on its way towards practical legislative independence. To trace it further would be beyond the scope of this work; it may be read either in Mr. Jose's admirable manual, or in any one of the several authoritative colonial histories. All that has been

attempted here is to have excited the reader's interest in the beginnings of those struggling settlements that have now united to form the Commonwealth of Australia,—the 'New Nation' to which, a tribute of admiration and of hope, this volume is devoted.

CHAPTER III

ROMANTIC ELEMENTS IN AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

The Struggle with the Aborigines

THE Australian aboriginal, as you may see him any day in the streets of Sydney, a squalid, degraded Caliban in European shirt and trousers, ever on the look out for 'celestial liquor' at the hands of passing Stephanos and Trinculos,—liquor, however, which has been strictly prohibited by Prospero,—is the degenerate descendant of a race considered by ethnologists to exhibit one of the lowest extant types of humanity. Closely conforming to the Johnsonian epigram of "manners none, customs beastly," the native Australian blacks had followed those customs for centuries on their sunny, thirsty continent, subsisting on grubs, marsupials, and fish, and making no more attempt at cultivation than the kangaroos and dingoes among which they dwelt. Like Homeric Cyclopes or ideal Spencerian men, they lived after the dictates of a primitive individualism,—an interesting contrast to the communism of the Maoris,—"each

man caring for himself and recking not of other."* Politically disunited, intellectually weak, numerically few in comparison to the vast extent of the continent that was their hunting-ground, they fell for the most part an easy prey to the early settlers, who, at a time when human life among the English was so little respected that no less than two hundred offences were punishable with death, were scarcely likely to be over-humane in their treatment of low-caste savages.

While New South Wales has had comparatively little trouble from the blacks, Queensland settlers were from the outset continually attacked. On one occasion a whole family, together with their 'station' hands, were massacred, nineteen in all. Merciless revenge was taken; nearly two hundred men, women, and children were shot down by the infuriated whites.†

* Their few and primitive tribal customs have been ably observed and described by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen and other students. Dr. Roth, Protector of Aborigines in Northern Queensland, contributed to the 1900-1901 meeting of the Australasian Science Association an illustrated lecture shewing the extraordinarily complicated figures at 'cat's cradle' evolved by Queensland aboriginals. At the same meeting, Mr. Wm. Freeman, of the Bourke Land Board, exhibited some conical structures of caked mud, worn by widows on the death of their husbands. Such is the weight of these 'widow's weeds' that we need feel no surprise that few aboriginal widows share the Vicar of Wakefield's antipathy to second marriages.

† The aborigines had played an important part in the discovery of what is now Queensland; for Oxley, who had been sent by Governor Brisbane of New South Wales to explore the Moreton

In Western Australia the blacks were a perpetual source of danger, being a bolder and more warlike race than their relatives of the south and east. Incensed by repeated murders of white settlers, the colonists rose in 1834 under the governor, Sir James Stirling, and at the 'Battle of Pinjarrah' took so severe a vengeance that the natives were awed into quietude.

The eucalyptus groves and fern-tree gullies of Tasmania could tell many a tale of horror of the atrocities committed in the convict days against the native blacks; massacre, torture, and outrage following so thick and fast, that it is not to be wondered that many a vacant chair in settlers' homesteads soon told its grim story of retribution. The early governors,—all credit to them,—did what they could for the natives; but their cause from the first was hopeless.

A serio-comic interlude, appropriate to the melodramatic character of early Australian history, is provided by the attempt of that Strafford among governors, Governor Arthur, to make a 'drive' of the natives; some two thousand soldiers, convicts, and settlers being set to the task of drawing a cordon round them, so as to imprison them all in a confined area in the centre. Slowly the work

Bay district, met there a tribe of blacks, among whom a settler named Pamphlet and two friends, shipwrecked seven months before, were living in amity. This meeting was of material aid to Oxley in his exploration of the surrounding country.

proceeded; hour by hour the toils closed round the (presumably) imprisoned savages. The cost was heavy, some £30,000 being expended; but who would grudge it to such a laudable object as the permanent settling of the native difficulty? At length the human net was drawn in, and the 'catch' counted. It did not take long. One man and one boy comprised the whole of the native *battue*, at the cost of about £15,000 a head. The rest had escaped through the too extended, or too inattentive, meshes.

It says much for the courage of this extremely able and extremely unpopular governor, that he confessed his failure by handing the settlement of the difficulty over to a Hobart bricklayer, G. A. Robinson, who had for years maintained friendly relations with the harassed natives. Appointed Protector of the Aborigines at the salary of £100 a year, this true hero and philanthropist went unarmed into the midst of the most dreaded tribes, and in a few years was able to persuade the whole of the black population, already vastly reduced, to come to Hobart and await the wishes of the Government.

The decision was in favour of deportation to Flinders Island. Here they died off rapidly. What were left were taken back, some years later, to the main island, where, in 1876, Truganini, the last survivor, died. The pathos of a vanishing race must not be allowed to warp our judgment to the

extent of hesitating to welcome the survival of the higher type.

The Romance of Exploration.

The story of Australian exploration, while naturally of a more intense interest to those whose homes now stand in what were, before it, untracked deserts, should not be without its appeal to all who honour heroism and cool determination in the face of continuous difficulty and danger. Two episodes stand out from the rest through their pathetic terminations, the loss of Leichardt, and the ill-starred expedition of Burke and Wills,—brave explorers all three, who bought immortality with death.

Dr. Ludwig Leichardt was a young German, who had left his country to avoid military service, not, assuredly,—witness his subsequent career,—for any lack of courage, but through zeal for the scientific studies to which he devoted his life and owed his mysterious death. In 1842, the year in which Leichardt reached Australia, despite the heroic labours of Sturt and previous pioneers, not one-tenth of the vast continent had been explored. A settlement had recently been formed at Port Essington, a spot on the promontory which forms the western wing of that striking feature of the North Australian coast-line, the Gulf of Carpentaria. This settlement had, of course, been made by sea ;

for the bulk of the country between it and Sydney (a distance of considerably more than a thousand miles) was *terra incognita*. In 1843 the New South Wales Government proposed an expedition to open up an overland route. Some delay, however, occurring, through necessary application to England, Leichardt persuaded some friends to help him forestall the official expedition by equipping him to attempt the journey on his own account. On October 1st, 1844, he set out from the Darling Downs with eight companions (two of whom were aborigines, whose bush-lore proved most useful), seventeen horses, and sixteen cattle,—a small equipment for such a formidable task. Skirting the well-watered Queensland coast, the explorers found the first months of their journey uneventful. On June 25th, 1845, however, as they were sitting round their camp-fire, some hostile natives stealthily approached and sent a shower of arrows among them, killing one and wounding two others. Thence, till they reached Port Essington, in December, the exploring party met with continued hardships. For many days they subsisted mainly upon 'flying foxes,' and they were "very near the last of everything" when the arrival at their goal crowned the bold and hazardous adventure with success.

Well for Leichardt could he have rested content with the glory of one achievement. Returning by sea from Port Essington to Sydney, he found

himself the most famous and befêted person in Australia. Scientific distinctions rained upon him from Europe. More tangible methods of proving their esteem were taken by Australian admirers, who presented him with some £2000. The small means, the long journey, the rich country thus laid open for settlement, contributed to make Leichardt the hero of a people as prone as other peoples to pay glory by results, and to prefer, as men did in Bacon's time, 'fructiferous' to purely 'luciferous' experiments. Leichardt leapt at once to the first place among Australian explorers. A little consideration should have served to make clear to his admirers that the very fact of the richness of the Queensland coastlands he discovered, while it contributed to the glory of the expedition according to judgment by results, detracted from the merit of the journey judged as a feat of ability and of heroic endurance. As a matter of fact, Leichardt's diaries shew him to have been wanting in many of the first essentials of a successful explorer.

His second expedition, which started in December, 1846, with the object of crossing the continent from east to west, was a complete failure. The explorers returned in the following July, having done nothing but "wander about on their own track and eat their supplies."* The failure of the expedition was so complete, and the errors

* FAVENC: *Australian Exploration*, p. 165.

in its conduct so obvious, that Leichardt saw his insecurely founded reputation tottering, and, after a minor expedition, determined to save it by another great attempt. Taking with him, it is supposed, six whites, (of whom the names of only five are recorded), two aborigines, and an inadequate supply of cattle and provisions, he set his face once more for the west. When we last hear of him, he is some hundred and fifty miles west of Brisbane, at a 'station' on the Fitzroy Downs. Hence we have a letter, dated April 3rd, 1848, wherein, after an account of the good fortune of the expedition so far, the writer concludes: "Seeing how much I have been favoured in my present progress, I am full of hopes that our Almighty Protector will allow me to bring my darling scheme to a successful termination."

The rest is silence. No trace of Leichardt, his followers, his cattle, his equipment, has ever been discovered.

Four and fifty years have passed, the habitable area of the continent has been enormously extended, frequent expeditions have set out for the express purpose of solving this secret of the Australian bush; yet no jot of evidence of the fate of the unfortunate men has ever come to light. The whole expedition,—men, cattle, horses, goats,*—have utterly vanished from the face of the earth, and

* There were 50 bullocks, 13 mules, 12 horses, 270 goats. (FAVENC: *Australian Exploration*, p. 166).

have left "not a wrack behind." Whether massacred by natives, starved by famine or thirst, drowned in one of the periodic floods, or burnt in one of the raging bush-fires that hell the Australian plains, it is beyond measure strange that no vestige of the explorers, neither tools nor dress nor written record, has ever found its way back into civilization. The silence of the desert has closed over them, and the shadow of half a century has but deepened the gloom that shrouds their fate.

The mystery of his death has proved an enduring pedestal for the glory of Leichardt. He still retains his sway over the imagination of Australians, and "frail hope" has scarcely even yet ceased to "dally with false surmise" concerning the fate of one of the boldest, if not the wisest, of Australian explorers.*

Twelve years after Leichardt vanished into the silence, the colony of Victoria, with honourable disinterestedness, organized, at the cost of £12,000, an expedition to cross the interior of the continent from the south of New South Wales to the north-west of Queensland. Camels were specially brought from India, and no trouble or expense was spared to ensure success. Unfortunately, the event shewed that Richard O'Hara Burke, the leader, combined with his proven intrepidity, defects of

* After Leichardt had set out on his last journey, a pardon arrived for the deserter, and permission to return to Germany. But he had passed beyond the jurisdiction of the Fatherland.

character, resulting in frequent quarrels with his men, and a lack of the scientific temper as notable as Leichardt's; while W. J. Wills, the second in command, was too ready to allow his own good judgment to be overruled by one who was his superior only in decision of will. On November 11th, 1860, Burke and Wills and the six others comprising their party, reached Cooper's Creek, and awaited the arrival of the main body of the expedition. After a month thus spent in inactivity, Burke could contain himself no longer, and dividing his party of eight into two sections, he left four to await his return, while with Wills and two others he himself set out for the Gulf of Carpentaria. Two months of arduous travel enabled them to come within some fifty miles of it. Provisions were now running short, and the journey back to Cooper's Creek was rich in disaster. One of the party was beaten by Burke for pilfering from the scanty stores, and shortly afterwards died from exhaustion. The three survivors, weak with hunger, dragged their steps at length to the spot where they had left their friends. This they reached on the evening of April 21st, four months and five days after they had left it.

To their dismay, they found it deserted. By an ironic fate, on the morning of the very day of their return, Brahe and the three others who had been left there, had decided to go in search of the main party, and, leaving provisions buried at the foot of

a tree, had abandoned their post. Bitterly disappointed at what they considered this desertion by their comrades, (though Brahe afterwards maintained that, their instructions being to wait three months, they had more than fulfilled them), Burke, Wills, and the camel-driver King, having restored their strength with the provisions left for them, set out for the confines of South Australian settlement, along a route taken three years previously by the explorer A. C. Gregory.* This was against the wishes of Wills and King, who both advocated return along their own old route towards the Darling. Burke paid the extreme penalty for his obstinacy, Wills for his weakness. Broken in body and spirit, sustaining bare life only with nardoo-seed, and an occasional gift of fish from passing aborigines, the condition of the explorers is made pitifully clear by a letter left at the old depôt on the creek by Wills on May 30th.

"We have been unable to leave the creek. Both camels are dead. Mr. Burke and King are down on the lower part of the creek. . . . We are trying to live the best way we can, like the blacks; but we find it hard work."

A month after this was written, the writer became too exhausted to move. His comrade left

* "We proceed to-morrow," wrote Burke on April 22nd, "slowly down the creek to Adelaide, by Mount Hopeless, and shall endeavour to follow Gregory's track, but we are very weak. The two camels are done up, and we shall not be able to travel faster than two or three miles a day."

him with a supply of water and nardoo, and set out to find friendly natives, and bring him aid. But when, on the second morning after they had left him, King awoke to share in the day's fight with famine, a glance at his companion's face shewed him that he was dead. King now returned to Wills, only to find that death had closed his sufferings too. He had met his fate unflinchingly, jesting *in extremis* like a Shakespearean hero.* King sprinkled with a little sand the pitifully shrunken body, and said the last farewell to this gentle gallant spirit. King, after three months wretched existence with a band of natives he met some days later, was rescued by a relief party under the son of William and Mary Howitt.

The strangest and saddest incident remains to tell. Brahe, on leaving the depôt at Cooper's Creek on April 21st, had found Wright, the leader of the main party, and with him had at once returned to the depôt to see if Burke and Wills had yet arrived. This was on May 8th. Not noticing that the hidden food had been taken, (for Burke and Wills had removed all traces of the disturbance of the *cache*), they concluded that the explorers had not returned, and so again departed. Three weeks later, as we have seen, poor Wills made his painful way back to the depôt to leave his letter; and he in his turn failed to see any traces

* His last entries in his note-book compare himself to Mr. Micawber.

of Wright and Brahe,—“a series,” moralizes the official historian, “of singular and fatal oversights that almost seem to have been preordained.”

Such are the two most famous stories of Australian exploration. Many others press forward for record; for many brave names are rightly written on their country's roll of honour in these victories of peace. Oxley, Hume, Stuart, Eyre, Cunningham; Sturt, struggling on in his self-imposed task, though struck with blindness through his privations; Kennedy, killed within sight of his goal, and dying in the arms of his faithful black attendant; *—these, and a score of others, are the men to whom Australians owe Australia.

The Romance of Gold

The story of the early days of gold-mining in Australia has often been narrated, but still retains the freshness of an Arabian tale. And romance,

* An aboriginal named Jacky-Jacky, from whose pathetic account of his master's murder by a hostile tribe of blacks, the following extract is taken:—“I carried Mr. Kennedy into the scrub. . . . He said, ‘I am out of wind, Jacky.’ . . . I asked him, ‘Are you going to leave me?’ And he said, ‘Yes, my boy, I am going to leave you.’ . . . He then said, ‘Jacky, you give me paper, and I will write.’ I gave him paper and pencil, and he tried to write, and he then fell back and died, and I caught him as he fell back and held him, and I then turned round myself and cried. I was crying a good while until I got well (that was about an hour), and then I buried him” (*vide* FAVENC: *Australian Exploration*, p. 173). We learn from Huxley's memoir that this famous man of science almost joined Kennedy's ill-fated expedition.

when brought in contact with normal Anglo-Saxon types, seems to gain in piquancy what it loses in picturesqueness.

Edward Hargreaves, a small squatter of some American experience, struck by the similarity of Australian to Californian conditions, mastered the art of gold-washing, and in 1851 put it into successful practice near Bathurst. In three months four hundred diggers were at work at the Ophir creek, and their sensational success soon set thousands following their example at every creek and gully along the Dividing Range.

Victoria was in danger of losing all its colonists, as they flocked to the golden lure, when suddenly came the news that a valuable find had been made within a score of miles from Melbourne. The discovery was soon followed by others, culminating in the unexampled wonders of Ballarat and Bendigo, where miners earned for continuous weeks the fabulous wages of £30 or £40 a day. When the tidings reached the large centres of population,—the simple truth, for hyperbole would have rendered it incredible,—a wild rush took place, which convulsed the whole social organization of the colonies.

“All classes,” writes a sober historian, “and all distinctions were levelled, the thirst for gold seizing upon the entire community. The shops were empty, the streets deserted, the doors of the counting-houses barred, the plough left rusting in the furrow, . . . while the port of Melbourne was filled

with unmanned vessels, dropping to pieces for lack of attention or repair. . . . The public service was reduced to abject inefficiency ; the police decamped, like their superiors, in search of fortune ; and even domestic servants, male and female, joined in the general stampede. The governor was reduced to a condition of absolute powerlessness, and ruled in Melbourne with pathetic loneliness, . . . a monarch without a realm." *

The 'boom,' as has been said, was based on facts. What need of human exaggeration, when nature herself exaggerated so magnificently? Before the end of 1851 no less than ten tons of gold had been taken from the Victorian fields. A nugget was picked up in 1853 weighing sixteen hundred and twenty ounces, and another a few years later that weighed six hundred more ; and as an ounce of Victorian gold is worth about £4, it is easy to see with what alchemistic rapidity vast fortunes were amassed.

Emigration from England and America became enormous. A quarter of a million arrived in Victoria by sea between the years 1853 and 1855. Prices, of course, rose in sympathy ; and men found it as profitable to act as the 'first robbers' of fortunate diggers as to be diggers themselves. Who that could afford his passage would not have taken ship for this 'Working-man's Paradise,'

where ordinary carpenters were earning £8 a week? So was it that gold proved a greater colonizer than Wakefield; and if it attracted many that would certainly not have impressed him as worthy colonists, scoundrels from every clime, it also summoned with its siren call many of the most vigorous and venturesome spirits of England and America.

It is noteworthy that on the Victorian, and indeed on the Australian goldfields generally, there was an absence of that violence which has made so many American diggings infamous. Excesses, of course, there were: it would be contrary to human nature that huge fortunes should be acquired in a few weeks, and should not sometimes be lost in as many minutes; contrary to human nature if sudden prosperity did not sometimes bring in its train debauch, disease, and death. Still, on the whole, the Australian miners are, and have ever been, a law-abiding community, eschewing Judge Lynch and all his works, sending their children to school and their wives to church.

One episode of lawlessness, however, mars early Victorian records, and might have led to serious results. A large proportion of the early diggers were, and preferred to be, 'outlanders,' taking no interest in the country in which they found themselves, having no intention of settling therein, only desiring to get rich as soon as possible and leave it. The Victorian authorities, however,

judged it only fair that the diggers should make some direct contribution to the revenue of the country in which they lived, and on whose protection they relied. Governor Fitzroy, of New South Wales, had from the first required the payment from each digger of a license fee of thirty shillings a month,—an unwise method of taxation, as it taxed the unsuccessful digger equally with the successful. Latrobe imposed the same system in Victoria, but so widespread was the discontent excited, and so difficult were the fees to collect, that he found that the tax was bringing in less than was actually required for the management of the fields.

Under his successor, Hotham, the matter came to a head. A riot or two under Latrobe had secured important concessions. Hotham refused to yield to similar methods of persuasion. Ballarat at length openly revolted; a Reform League was instituted demanding separation from England, and the abolition of all mining licenses. The 'Republic of Victoria' was formally proclaimed, and a hasty camp was formed within the 'Eureka stockade,' a mile from Ballarat. Over it floated the New Republic's flag, the Southern Cross on a field of blue. The rebels numbered some fourteen hundred, and, after waiting two days, and finding the Republic still in existence, the commander of the troops sent three hundred men to charge the stockade;—with immediate success. Hotham then appointed

a commission, which put an end to all legitimate grievances of the diggers, and the disaffected soon settled down as law-abiding subjects of the Queen.

The Bushrangers

The history of Australian bushranging naturally falls into two periods, of which the first comprises the convict days. There was little romance about the early bushranger, generally an escaped convict who wreaked his brutal violence on any that he found weaker than himself. Yet of these early convict times, the grim story of Dignum and Comerford seems worthy of record.*

In 1837 three convicts escaped from the Tass district of New South Wales. Selecting Dignum, the most determined of them, as leader, they forthwith decided to adopt the Ishmael life of the bushranger. Soon there joined them a handsome youth named Comerford, fair and tall, whom Dignum chose as his lieutenant. Five other convicts, absconding from the masters to whom they had been assigned, joined the little band, which soon spread terror through the neighbourhood of what was afterwards to become the great city of Melbourne. Eventually deciding to eschew

* Chronologically, Martin Cash belongs to this period; but rascal as he was, he had some touches of the gentleman in his nature, and his extraordinary career has really more kindred with the later exploits of Gardiner and Hall.

their dangerous vocation, and to lend tone to Wakefield's select settlement in South Australia, they set out for Adelaide. But fortune frowned on their enterprise; and one night, in the vicinity of Mount Alexander, they found themselves with scant provisions and divided plans. Dignum would brook no questioning of his authority, and that night, when all his companions had rolled themselves in their blankets, with their feet to the camp-fire, and were dreaming,—who knows?—of innocence and home, this devil among devils gathered available weapons together and prepared to assassinate them all. The boy-lieutenant, Comerford, however, was not yet asleep, and Dignum was obliged to communicate his intention to him. Comerford at once assented, and the two at once set to work to murder the other seven.

It was the work of a few minutes. Then these hounds of hell grinned approval at each other across their handiwork. Erecting a great fire of logs to remove all trace of their victims, they returned to Melbourne, and took service under a wealthy squatter. Deserting after some weeks of peaceful toil, they were arrested for breaking their agreement; but escaped, and resumed their journey to Adelaide.

As they went slowly on, a hideous resolve matured in the mind of Dignum. His secret was unsafe so long as it was known to any but himself. Once kill his comrade, and all chance of

discovery was at an end. Seizing a favourable opportunity, he raised his gun to his shoulder, and shot his young companion from behind. Comerford, however, 'scotched, not killed,' succeeded in escaping to Melbourne, where he made full confession to the authorities, and secured Dignum's arrest. But the police for a long time refused to believe Comerford's story. Accustomed to deal with the vilest of mankind, they still retained sufficient respect for human nature to think this tale of treachery impossible. Bushrangers they had known for years, but they had known them, even the worst of them, risking their lives for their comrades, and true at all costs to the ancient maxim of 'honour among thieves.' Comerford, however, consistently maintained the truth of his story, and when taken in handcuffs to the scene of the tragedy, was able to shew skulls, bones, and clothes that had survived the flames. On his way back, profiting by a slight increase of consideration shewn him, now his story had been thus confirmed, he effected his escape at the cost of another murder, and once more took to the bush. Eventually rearrested, he was duly hanged in Sydney. Dignum was sent, a convict for life, to Norfolk Island, which, foul as it was,—to echo the old chronicler,—was defiled by his fouler presence.

So closes this lurid incident, rather resembling some such grim mediæval legend as is preserved

in the *Pardoner's Tale*, than a chapter in the social history of the nineteenth century.

Of the bushrangers of the post-convict period, the formidable Frank Gardiner may, perhaps, be taken as typical. Like most of the later bushrangers, he was a native of Australia, born near Goulburn in 1830; a stalwart, wild young fellow, brave and self-confident, and possessed of the youthful Shakespeare's plentiful lack of ability, (so little was his Latin), to distinguish clearly between *meum* and *tuum*. After serving several years at hard labour for horse-stealing, and obtaining his release on ticket of leave, he developed into the most daring and powerful of all Australian law-breakers, well earning his title of King of the Road.

His most famous exploit was the robbery of the gold escort at Eugowra, New South Wales. It was unusual for diggers to keep the gold they found. The general practice was for them to sell it to banks or private dealers, who had it conveyed to Sydney under Government superintendence. On June 15th, 1862, the week's treasure,—a small one, as it happened, but still amounting in value to £14,000,—was duly placed in the mail-coach at Forbes, the centre of the Lachlan mining district. A guard of armed police accompanied the convoy. For the first five hours the journey was uneventful; but as they neared Eugowra, the passengers noticed several bullock teams drawn up

by the side of the road, and the driver was compelled to bring his horses to a walk, in order to drive safely between them and the rocks that here fringe the road. Suddenly a number of men,* with red shirts and blackened faces, fired on the coach from behind the rocks. A second volley followed rapidly on the first, wounding several passengers. Two of the constables returned the fire, but the only result of this was that the horses became terrified, and, bolting, overturned the coach. Passengers and police sought refuge in the bush, while Gardiner and his comrades securely packed the gold upon the best pair of the coach horses. They then gave permission to the draymen, who, according to instructions, had been lying on their faces and taking no part in the recent business, to proceed on their ways; while they themselves sought to set as much distance as possible between themselves and the police, who they knew must soon be on their track. Through extreme good fortune and extreme boldness and resource, Gardiner, though many of his accomplices were caught, managed to remain at large.

Success, however, brings satiety; and Gardiner seems at length to have wearied of ill-doing, and settled down peacefully with a female accomplice

* What number is disputed, there being almost as much discrepancy in the accounts as was the case with Falstaff's 'men in buckram,' "one report giving 13, another 12, another 10, and others down to 4" (WHITE : *Australian Bushranging*, vol. i. p. 247).

to run a store and shanty at Appis Creek in Queensland. Tracked thither at last by a Sydney detective, he was arrested, and after a sensational acquittal on one charge, pleaded 'guilty' to two others, and was sentenced by the Chief Justice to hard labour for thirty-two years. But his two years of honest storekeeping,—during which, it is said, large amounts of gold had been repeatedly entrusted to him for safe keeping,—his excellent behaviour in gaol, and the eloquence of his sisters, all told powerfully in his favour; and in 1874 he was released, to spend the evening of his days in San Francisco, free, if an exile.

Many other bushrangers of the post-convict days resembled Gardiner in their courage, their courtesy to women, their reckless humour; but few had his good fortune.

Rigorous punishment at last stamped out the nuisance, which had its origin, it may be observed, quite as often in the wild, high spirits of youth as in any ingrained criminality of character. Bushranging, indeed, despite the misery it caused, must be confessed to have done much to develope heroism, alertness, and endurance, both on the part of those that practised the desperate calling, and those whose duty was to hunt them down.

CHAPTER IV

EXTERNAL CONDITIONS

Climate—Scenery—Capital Cities

AUSTRALIA covers so vast an extent of territory,—little under three million square miles,*—that it might well seem as impossible to collect diverse conditions under one head and talk of Australian climate or scenery, as it is to include under one adjective the frozen steppes of Russia, Italian olive-gardens, and the gorse-lit heaths of our own Surrey. Nevertheless, as it is for purposes of comparison sometimes permissible roughly to generalize and talk of European climate and conditions of life, so is it also convenient to ignore differences and group resemblances together in the case of Australia, where conditions are surprisingly uniform throughout the continent. Of course, such general remarks on this matter as are within the scope of this book must be understood to admit of exceptions. Thus, to say that Australia is subject

* Being thus, approximately, as large as Europe or the United States of America, and twenty-six times as large as the British Islands.

to great heat in summer, must not be held to contradict the fact that in certain localities, *e.g.* on the snowy flanks of Kosciusko, the temperature is always low; any more than to say that Europe enjoys a temperate climate would be understood to deny that on her northern shores the conditions are arctic in their severity.

The uniformity of Australian conditions is modified by two main divisions. The first is into (a) the fertile coast-lands of the east and south-east; (b) the raised table-lands, (c) the great plains, of the interior. The second is that caused by the tropic of Capricorn, parting the one-third of Australia that is within the tropics from the two-thirds which lie within the warm-temperate zone. But throughout Australia the winters are mild, the summers oppressively hot. Throughout Australia there is superabundance of sunlight, and dearth of water. Throughout Australia the climate, however unpleasant, is never unhealthy.*

During December, the hottest month, in two-thirds of the continent the mean temperature is over 80°;† during July, the coldest, three-fourths of the continent have a mean temperature of over 50°.‡ Snow is very rare, ice almost unknown.

The healthiness of the climate of Australia is

* Even in the tropical districts of the extreme north, malaria tends to disappear as settlement advances.

† In 719,000 square miles it is over 90°.

‡ 300,000 square miles have a mean July temperature of over 70°.

largely due to that very lack of moisture, which is, from the industrial point of view, her greatest bane. In two-thirds of the continent the average annual rainfall is less than twenty inches, while 1,219,600 square miles have less than ten. Rivers are few, and the smaller streams, or 'creeks,' mostly run dry in the summer.

Except in the west, and in certain favoured coastal districts, the whole of the continent is subject to periodical droughts of great severity. No more desolate scene can be imagined than a sheep 'station'* in such a time of drought. Upon the vast suffering herds,—the station is, perhaps, the size of an English county,—the sun blazes continually. Every vestige of grass has long been burnt away. Look to the horizon in every direction: you will see nothing but the long, brown, sun-baked plains, broken here and there by a starved eucalyptus, spreading its dry leaves to the metallic glare of the sky, or, perhaps, ring-barked† by the squatter, spreading its white, unsightly limbs in invocation to the merciless gods, a praying

* *Station*, "originally the house with the necessary buildings and home-premises of a sheep-run, and still used in that sense; but more generally signifying the run and all that goes with it. Stations are distinguished as 'sheep-stations' and 'cattle-stations'" (Prof. MORRIS' *Austral English*, p. 436). Dr. Morris' first quotation is dated 1833, in a passage from the explorer Sturt.

† Trees of the eucalyptus order are killed in Australia by making a circular incision in the bark, thus preventing the nutritive juices being carried up into the branches.

corpse. Morning after morning the fiery globe of flame rises through cloudless air; night after night it drops in crimson behind the scorching plains. Feebler and feebler grow the sheep; miserably bleating they wander, mere skin and bone, till they can no longer move; here and there, one by one, they sink down exhausted. Now is the crows' opportunity; hovering over them in obscene squadrons, day after day, biding their time, at length they dart down at the poor creatures' eyes, and, first pecking them out, tear the skin from off the quivering backs, before life, and the capacity for suffering, is at an end. A day or two more, and the sun flashes on thousands of bleaching skeletons, rejoicing to have completed his work. Then, perchance, the long-looked-for rain will come in torrents, and sweep in sudden floods over the devastation the drought has caused.

This is no 'fancy' picture. Never a summer but scenes as grim as this are enacted in some region of the great thirsty continent; millions of wretched animals perish thus 'by inchmeal,' unpitied, living tools for the wealth of their masters, living sacrifices to Plutus and Apollo.*

* There are now 32,000,000 sheep less in Australia than there were in 1891, and more than 1,000,000 less cattle. [Since this was written, many more millions must be added to the account of the great drought, now, (December, 1902) we all trust, happily at an end.] "The number of sheep in Australia," says Mr. Coghlan, "was at its maximum in 1891, every year since then shewing a large decrease from the one preceding" (*loc. cit.*, p. 479). This is

Half-sister to the drought, the devastating bush-fire is a terror to the Australian pastoralist. Kindled by a mere spark, in the hot, dry summer months, perhaps from a passing engine, perhaps from a tramp's camp-fire, an avalanche of flame sweeps the country for miles, leaping from tree to tree, stayed only from the squatter's residence by the clearing left purposely round it.* The most terrible of these visitations, (every summer sees thousands of bush-fires on a small, and often perfectly harmless, scale) took place in Victoria in 1851, just before the gold discoveries.

On February 6th of that year, ever since known as 'Black Thursday,' a gigantic bush-fire arose, and swept southwards on the wings of the hot north wind.

partly to be explained by increase in agriculture, but must partly be attributed to reckless over-stocking and trusting to luck in the matter of water-supply, instead of making proper provision by water-storage or artesian bores. A rich squatter informed the writer that, though in a notoriously droughty region, he had never lost a single sheep through drought : but then he had spent some thousands of pounds in securing ample water-storage : but he quoted, to shew the callousness prevailing in the matter, the remark of a neighbouring squatter, who had suffered severely in a recent drought : "Well, I reckon it takes 50,000 sheep to manure my land."

* The traveller by train through Australia in the summer months will have frequent opportunities of watching bush-fires in progress. Where the vegetation is scanty, the flames are of no great height or density. The sight in the evening, as the train passes between long rows of quaintly wreathing trunks, outlined against the sky in points of fire, is of a strange beauty.

"We are told by an eye-witness that the conflagration was terrible in its completeness; men, women, and children, sheep and cattle, birds and snakes, fled commingled before the fire in one common panic. For hundreds of miles the country was wrapped in flames; the most fertile districts were swept clean, flocks and herds were abandoned, and the entire population rushed in terrified hordes for their lives. The ashes from the forests on fire at Macedon, forty-six miles distant, littered the streets of Melbourne." *

Awful as are the ravages of drought and bush-fire, it is wondrous to see how soon nature forgets her terrible mood, how soon after the rain the grass shoots fresh, the undergrowth sprouts anew, and Australia is herself again. Robbed by the indecious nature of her foliage of the glories of an English spring, Australia is compensated by a sudden flush of springtide after every shower.

Most of the beasts of the Australian bush are nocturnal in their habits. The sufferer from the midday glare may be tempted to wish mankind could follow their example. Unattractive as much Australian scenery is in the day, night, even in the barest parts of the bush, has a bewitching charm. The bright clear air, the brilliancy of the moonlight, the aroma of the gum-leaves and the wattle-blossom, the sense of infinite extent and infinite repose given by the utter stillness and loneliness of the whole

* COGHLAN: *The Seven Colonies*, p. 44.

fragrant scene,—these are among the things that endear his country to the patriotic Australian, and make him, though he may linger among the ‘pleasures and palaces’ of Europe, return to his native bush declaring ‘there is no place like home.’

Nor must it be imagined that in the daytime Australian scenery is without æsthetic charm. True that over the bulk of the continent the normal prospect is of long, low, brown-green plains of stubbly grass and stunted eucalyptus; that the half-lights and subtle colour-harmonies that please the eye in England, the soft clouds that make a heaven of the Welsh hills, are here unknown.

Yet comes a time in the evening, when a rich glow from the sun kindles a light that never was on sea or land in English latitudes, softening all that is crude, glorifying all that is mean, and for a full half-hour making Australia the loveliest among continents. A woman may, by the ‘good housewife Fortune at her wheel,’ be denied beauty of colouring, or comeliness of feature; yet may a saving glory of expression set her charm above that of many who have both. Australia may be unattractive in work-a-day mood and work-a-day attire. But when, clad in her robe of evening, she smiles, what old-world beauty can compare with hers?

Apart from the occasional charm of even the barest of Australian scenery, apart from the transient beauty of many portions of the continent,—

especially Western Australia,—in the spring, when the whole bush is a garden of wild flowers, there are many districts which, judged by any standard in the world, must be admitted supremely beautiful. Among such 'beauty spots' is what Mr. George Meredith, in his one colonial story, alludes to as a "place called Gippsland," the lake-country district of Victoria, the Swan River in Western Australia, the tropical coast scenery of Queensland, and the Blue Mountains and Illawarra country of New South Wales.*

The Blue Mountain scenery is especially sublime. The mountains, the most beautiful parts of which are situate some seventy or eighty miles from Sydney, in a westerly direction, are of no great height, the highest points only reaching four thousand feet. Their beauty is due partly to their bold contours, the grand sweep of their curves, the sheer precipices piercing downwards almost to the sea-level, over which leap some magnificent waterfalls; partly to the exquisite vegetation that grows in these deep hollows; partly to the thick forests of eucalyptus with which the hill-sides and summits are for ever clothed, giving to the distance the cobalt hue whence the mountains derive their

* Tasmania, which, as a member of the Federation, may now be considered, despite the 'loping leagues of sea' between them, an integral part of Australia, is especially rich in beautiful scenery, vying in brilliance of verdure and boldness of outline even with that of New Zealand.

name, and forming with the red soil on which they grow the most charming of colour contrasts,—especially when the evening glow sheds its unearthly radiance on crag and forest, fern-valley and waterfall.*

In spite of the attractions of colonial country life,—and with all its difficulties and drawbacks, there are yet many,—one-third of the whole population of Australia prefers to live in the six capitals: Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart, and Perth.†

Of towns other than capitals the growth is curiously slow, there being only three other towns in the whole of Australia which have a population of forty thousand,‡ and only four others reaching twenty thousand.

* The writer has fresh in his memory a climb made some years since to the summit of Mount Solitary, a few miles from Katoomba. Setting out on a bright, windless, cloudless summer morning, we followed an uncertain track to within a few hundred yards of the top of the steep hill. Then on hands and knees we climbed over granite boulders that scorched our palms, and slowly and painfully, in the broiling midday sun, gained the summit, to find all our toil rewarded. Round us on every side stood the giant chorus of bold-hewn hills, each in his everlasting mantle of green; here and there the silver streak of a waterfall piercing the distance. As far as eye could reach, no sign of life, no sign of man, nothing to break the sublime monotony, nothing but the unchanging hills as they were ages before man came to trouble the universe, as they may be ages after that 'little breed' has passed and is forgotten.

† Forty-one per cent. of the population of Victoria live in Melbourne, forty per cent. of the population of South Australia in Adelaide. *Vide* Coghlan, p. 295.

‡ Newcastle (N. S. W.), Ballarat, and Bendigo (Vic.).

It would thus seem that the Australian prefers to live either in semi-isolation in the country, or in the 'crowded culture' of one of the capitals. And there is much to be said in favour of his choice. The country township is, as a rule,* neither æsthetically nor socially attractive, consisting for the most part of a long street of wooden shops, garishly painted in primary colours, one or two plain but comfortable houses in their own grounds, two or three public-houses of blatant ugliness, a church and chapels,—small and dismal,—a town-hall, a court-house, and a reading-room inscrutably designated a 'school of arts.'†

The colonial capital, on the other hand, is from almost every point of view an interesting and agreeable place to live in, and it can hardly cause surprise that there has been a strong tendency to flock to the great centres, Sydney and Melbourne in particular.

Of these capital cities any detailed description would here be out of place, but enough may be said to give the reader a general idea of their appearance.

* The description applies to the smaller bush townships. The larger have more architectural pretensions and social facilities ; and there are exceptions even among small bush townships which are comely to the sight and pleasant to live in. Nevertheless, it is believed that those who know Australia best will agree that there *are* exceptions, and that the text not unfairly describes the rule.

† Readers of Mr. Max O'Rell's volume on the colonies will remember the amusing account of how the author secured the immortality of Molière on the walls of one of these institutions.

Sydney is in many ways a delightful city; delightful, first, in its climate, which for at least two-thirds of the year, leaves little to be desired. The heat of summer is more than compensated by the mildness of a snowless, almost frostless, winter, the charm of autumn and spring. Yet it must be admitted that the Sydney climate has its evil moods. The hot winds that sweep from the sun-scorched interior, and sometimes parch Sydney for days together, are entirely healthy but exceedingly unpleasant, and many find the moist heat and the sea-breezes enervating, and hasten to Tasmania or the mountains to avoid the three or four most trying months of summer, just as English people flock to the seaside. But the vital statistics * prove that the New South Wales capital is, even at its hottest,† not unhealthy, for it goes without saying that, for the majority of Sydney residents, to migrate for the summer is out of the question. Eliminate a score or so of unpleasant days a year, scattered over several weeks, and the climate of Sydney approaches perfection: the everlasting sunshine,

* The mean death-rate over a number of years in Sydney is 14·98. In London it is 20·10, and in Paris over 28.

† The highest temperature in 1899 was 108·5°; the mean summer temperature 71° (Coghlan, p. 6). From his experience, the writer would judge that the typical summer day has the thermometer at noon about 84°, sinking in the evening to 70°. Temperatures over 100° are quite exceptional, occurring one or two days, at most, in a summer. The Blue Mountain resorts, Katoomba, Bowral, etc., afford summer temperatures somewhat lower and much drier, within a few hours of Sydney.

the balmy, starlit nights, the fragrant languor of the peaceful cicala-serenaded autumn evenings, —these are among the facets of the 'Jewel of Australia.'

In position, Sydney is conspicuously blessed. The proverbially noble harbour, round whose myriad 'sun-lit coves of peace' the city is built, has not, perhaps, that romantic loveliness that extorts immediate enthusiasm. The shores are low, and, where not built upon, dressed in an uniform mantle of undersized gums and scrub. The defiling marks of man are on the rocks, and the incoming vessel rides between somebody's pills and somebody else's soap. Nor is the city from the water architecturally imposing. But the longer one lives in Sydney, the more the harbour unfolds its charms.

There is a rest in those same-tinted shores that no variety can give; there is an unmatched glory in those endless bays of calm deep water, carrying the monsters of the ocean into the city's heart; there is a splendour in the flashing turquoise, the regal robe of the great city, its background of countless streets, its edging of endless gardens.

And when night comes, and the scores of gaily-lighted ferries flit like fire-flies across the noiseless waters, when the winds are sleeping with the waves, with quivering stars for sentinel; while the glittering lamps of the city, another starry host, send a thousand broken shafts of gold far into blue-grey depths; when every hue is harmonized,

when every sound is lulled, when the fragrant air is soft as the breath of sirens; then who could resist the spell of this harbour of harbours, this snatch of unearthly music fallen from Paradise?

Apart from the harbour and the public gardens, always beautiful, Sydney has in externals little to shew. The architecture is, like that of most modern cities, more pretentious than successful, the artistic movement that of recent years has transformed so many London streets, here finding barely an echo. Some old buildings,—for Sydney is of venerable antiquity among Australian cities,—preserve the memory of the days of convict labour in their solid masonry, where many a soul's tragedy lies turned to stone. Domestic architecture, especially in the pretty harbour suburb of Mosman's Bay, has recently been on the upward grade; but the ordinary Sydney tram-suburb is repulsively ugly. Of public edifices perhaps the only two completely satisfactory to eye and mind are the University main buildings, of which the magnificent great hall is an example of the perpendicular style that will bear comparison with any modern academic structure; and St. Mary's cathedral, a noble pile of decorated work, overlooking the domain. The Post-office, built on a sumptuous scale,* is ill proportioned, and further defaced by

* Although the portions open to the public for the purchase of stamps, etc., are ridiculously small and inconvenient, inducing a kind of pit-door crush on every mail-day.

attempts at carving, worthy to be set with those that adorn the Oxford Schools.

The Anglican cathedral is a small perpendicular building, dwarfed by the adjoining Town Hall,—its interior deformed by a quite remarkably hideous series of geometrical lavatory tiles of the pre-Doulton age. The Town Hall is notable for its size, and for a praiseworthy absence in its white interior of that frequent kind of ornamentation that does not ornament. Of other buildings, the most attractive are the great business houses, "stately shops" that would have delighted Dr. Johnson's heart, lining George and Pitt and King streets with all the wonders of modern merchandise.

The plague has of recent years done much towards the purification of modern Sydney. Streets of rookeries near the wharves have been swept away; others are threatened. Slums still survive in Surry (*sic*) Hills and Woolloomoolloo that would disgrace Whitechapel; for it will take many visits of the plague thoroughly to rouse the municipal conscience. But sad as it is that slums should exist in such a young and prosperous city, it must not be supposed that their number is great in proportion to its size. To do it justice, Sydney can boast, not only of a fine climate and lovely surroundings, but of a larger number of healthy and well-built homes than are likely to be found in any contemporary city of equal size. Only let its

citizens be true to themselves, and it may well be in time the fairest of earthly cities. If not, it will not be the fault of nature.

If nature has done less for Melbourne than for Sydney, man has done more. The world had learnt something in the half-century that separates the foundation of the two cities, and Melbourne is better laid out and better built than Sydney, just as the Federal capital now on the eve of creation should be, unless we have stood still for the last sixty years, even better built and better laid out than Melbourne.

Though near the sea, Melbourne proper is not absolutely on it, two miles of railway connecting the city with the quay in Hobson's Bay. The river Yarra,—at whose occasional ill-savour the natives of harbour-proud Sydney are pleased to scoff,—winds through the town, and does much to break the monotony of city parallelograms.

The Victorian capital is in magnificence, solidity, and a general air of expansiveness, comfort, and wealth, easily the first city in the southern hemisphere, and will compare most favourably in these respects with any like-sized city in England or America. It is to an American city that it is most usually compared, especially in the huge scale of its public buildings, the excellence of its tramway system, and the mental alertness of its citizens. Four degrees of latitude lower than Sydney, Melbourne enjoys a climate at once cooler and

drier.* While the winters are colder, the summer temperatures are often higher than any recorded in the older city.† The average annual rainfall is about twenty-five inches, rather more than half that of Sydney. During the summer months an exodus sets in to the many watering-places within easy reach, which bear a nearer resemblance to the English seaside resorts than anything in New South Wales. Of inland health resorts, Mount Macedon, where the Governor has his summer residence, corresponds to Moss Vale and Katoomba in the neighbouring colony,—or state, as, since the Federation, it is more correct to call it,—with the advantage of being nearer to the capital.

Melbourne architecture is of a grandiose and solid order, but there is a good proportion of buildings that aim at higher things. The Anglican cathedral of St. Paul's, as yet unfinished, is among the most successful. The exterior of the Houses of Parliament is imposing, and many of the Bank buildings,—notably those of the E. S. and A. Bank in Collins Street,—are finer than their London prototypes. If there is nothing in the externals of Melbourne University to vie with the Sydney Great Hall, it comprises a number of buildings well adapted to their purpose. Of St. Patrick's

* The mean temperature of Melbourne is 57·3°; of Sydney, 62·9°.

† For 1899 the highest shade temperature in Sydney was 108·5°, for Melbourne 110·7°; the lowest in Sydney was 35·9°, for Melbourne 27° (COGHLAN: *Seven Colonies*).

Cathedral, the Town Hall, and other edifices, Melbournians are not unjustifiably proud; and their shops, if not quite what Mr. Froude calls them, "gorgeous as any in London or Paris,"* probably surprise most Parisians and Londoners by their size and efficiency.

The façade of the fine Public Library suggests the great parent museum in Bloomsbury; nor is it the only public library in the Victorian capital. The suburb of Prahran also boasts an excellent collection of books, and other suburbs maintain Melbourne's reputation for culture by following a good example. Theatres are both numerous and well-appointed; parks and gardens are as fair as Sydney's in everything except position.

On the whole, then, Melbourne must be taken as the 'show' Australian city. There is a dignity, a 'metropolitan feeling,' in her broad, well-kept streets that you will not find elsewhere. Collins Street, Swanston Street, or Bourke Street,—crowned, Paris-like, with the façade of Parliament House,—would any one of them make the reputation of a meaner city. Nothing is better calculated to give the stranger an idea of colonial growth and power than the view from Prince's Bridge, or from some raised position such as the dome of the Law Courts, overlooking the town. The orderly extent of long, broad streets, magnificent public buildings, the roaring thoroughfares,

* *Oceana*, p. 82.

the crowded pavements,—and all this where little more than half a century ago a bush track joined two or three rows of wooden huts,—make a sight sufficient to impress even the most vulgar of imaginations. And if there are no buildings quaint or beautiful with age, are not these charms of older cities often paid for too dearly in heritages of sin and shame? To the old-world critic the champion of Melbourne may fairly say, '*The cities of Europe have their ancestral palaces; they have also their legions of ancestral slums. Here you will find few slums that are worth the name. Poor are indeed among us, but riches may at any time be among them. Here you will find men who look less to the past than to the future; who, like the Americans, have forgotten their feudalism and frankly accept the conditions of modern industrial society; and who, in accepting them, confidently look towards obtaining in the near future that position in the world to which their intelligence and energy entitle them.*'

Perhaps of all the capitals Adelaide is the most typically Australian. From the time when the visitor, disembarking at the port, is carried past suburbs of little white verandahed cottages, or cottaged verandahs,—suburbs of familiar English names and oddly unfamiliar aspect,—clean and neat, but bedaubed with crude advertisements, all the cruder for the bright sunny air, he feels that he is making the acquaintance of a new civilization,

neither English nor American, though containing many elements of both.

The seven miles of Antipodean Croydons, Cheltenham, Bromptons, etc., are soon rattled through in the two-classed, matting-seated train, and the spacious green city lies before us, country-town and capital in one. Adelaide owes much to the wisdom of its first founders: it is the most spacious, cleanest, and best-planned of Australian cities; a comely, comfortable settlement, with its broad thoroughfares well lined with trees and shrubs, its lavish gardens, spacious public buildings, green-set mansions and ample cottage homes; while round it rises a pleasant background of hills, quivering in the sunny distance.

The climate is unpleasantly hot in summer, 100° being frequently exceeded by the shade temperature.* But a certain amount of relief is always obtainable on the hills,—Mount Lofty (1750 feet) being only a dozen miles from the city,—or at the several seaside resorts within easy reach.

Apart from the quaintness of old Trinity Church, and the massiveness of the Town Hall and the Banks, there is nothing in Adelaide architecture that calls for special comment. King William Street, with its width of one hundred and thirty two feet, has been voted by more than one English

* The mean temperature for 1900 was 62·4°; for the hottest month, 87·3°; for the coolest, 43·5°. The average annual rainfall is less than 21 inches.

critic 'the handsomest in the southern hemisphere.' Small as it is, (the population, urban and suburban, is but one hundred and fifty thousand), Adelaide boasts, like the still smaller Hobart, its university, and has an excellent art gallery. The business streets have something of that combination of city and rusticity that characterize an English country town on market-day. But the visitor's eyes are at once attracted by the queer Australian vehicles, 'sulkies,' 'buggies,'—even an occasional bullock-dray,—the permanent path-shades of all the shops, the lightly clothed men and women, the ubiquitous horse, and the inevitable verandah.

If Sydney relies on the glory of its harbour, Melbourne on the dignity of its streets, Adelaide rests its claim for consideration on the beauty of its position, the generosity of its distances, its wealth of trees and gardens, orchards and vineyards, the sunny animation of its business quarters, the pleasant flavour of the country permeating all. On the whole, it is certainly, irrespective of size, one of the most attractive of modern towns. Rich with ample buildings, girt with lovely and plentiful gardens, healthy and progressive, the 'White City,' as it is called, though not of course to be compared in wealth or scale with either Sydney or Melbourne, attaches its citizens to itself by an even stronger sentiment of home.

The Queensland capital, fully six degrees north

of Sydney, is frankly a subtropical city. But if the summer heat is greater than in Sydney or in Melbourne,* the regularity of the seasons is greater also, and violent changes are less frequent. Moreover, winter in Brisbane, as in most parts of Queensland, is perfection itself. The city stands twenty-five miles from the mouth of the Brisbane river, which has been dredged so as to admit the largest vessels up to the city wharves. The English traveller may be reminded of the passage up the Orwell to Ipswich; only, instead of that note of hereditary proprietorial peace, that reserved air of mild benignity that nature bestows on the homely English scene, here we have a suggestion of tropic marsh and forest, here shrills the untiring cicala, here blazes the sun through the shrubs and the winding lines of mangrove trees.

If Melbourne and Adelaide may be grouped together as spacious symmetrically ordered cities, Brisbane must be classed with Sydney as an Australian town originally built on the model of an English village, and consequently much less convenient if more picturesque. Picturesque it undoubtedly is; the "first flush of the tropics" is

* The mean temperature of Brisbane for 1900 was 68.7° ; the mean of the hottest month, 77.3° ; of the coldest, 56.1° . The rainfall for thirty-five years averages just over 50 inches per annum. The writer was told by a bank manager of Scottish birth, who, having lived nine years in Sydney and seven or eight in Brisbane, should have had better opportunities of judging than most, that on the whole he found the Brisbane climate preferable to that of Sydney.

in its blood even more than in Sydney's; while the beauty of Brisbane girls is as proverbial as of Sydney harbour,—vivacious, bright, well-dressed, lending colour and movement, sweetness and light, to the buzzing streets.

Small city as it still remains, containing scarcely more than one hundred thousand persons, Brisbane feels itself to be the head of a vast and vastly opulent colony, a land of great squatters and great fortunes, of gold, of diamonds, of tropic produce. Thus, if it has its slums and its ill-drained quarters,—and in this matter there has been considerable improvement of recent years,—it can claim one of the finest streets,—Queen Street,—and some of the most imposing buildings in Australia.

Brisbane is proud of its Parliament House, of its Victoria Bridge, prouder still of the extraordinary beauty of the Acclimatization Society's Gardens. Though no wise forethought has swathed the growing city in the Park-lands that are the privilege of Adelaide, or with the fair green forest-belts of Dunedin, yet endowed by nature in a lavish mood with all the beauties of river and hill and valley, a wealth of shrubs and trees, profusion of flowers, Brisbane, when it wakes to a full sense of its responsibilities, will be a city that need fear no comparison.

Founded in 1829, but not constituted a city until 1880, nor shewing much promise of growth until

the gold discoveries of recent years, Perth has been hitherto a village indeed to be the capital of so huge a territory. It is still less than a twelfth the size of Sydney or Melbourne; but has more than quadrupled in the past decade, and grows rapidly.*

Somewhat higher in latitude than Sydney, on the opposite side of the continent, Perth has a mean shade temperature of 64°. Cool nights and a dry atmosphere render the summer heat tolerable.† The city has a fine position on a reach of the Swan River; and has a solid English air of comfort lacking in more ambitious southern capitals. Generally unaffected by the droughts that beset from time to time most parts of the continent, Perth and its neighbourhood are among the cheeriest and brightest spots in all Australia. After the stone and stucco of Sydney and Melbourne, the eye rejoices in the contrasts afforded by the red-brick homesteads and their surrounding greenery.

* Population in 1891, 8447; in 1900, 32,200. (Males are nearly 10,000 in excess of females.) 500 new houses were built in 1898. The fact that the mail steamers now call at its port, Fremantle, and not at Albany, is contributing not a little to the growth of Perth.

† The mean temperature for the hottest month in 1900 was 76·2°; for the coldest, 55·1°. The highest reading of the thermometer during the year was 106° on a day in February; the lowest was 39° on a day in September. The average annual rainfall in Perth is 33 inches. The Government astronomer claims a climate "for agricultural, horticultural, or ordinary living purposes probably unsurpassed in the world" (*Australian Handbook* for 1901, p. 416).

Hobart remains to speak of; the smallest and the fairest of all the capitals. Built from the shore up the slope of a graceful hill, with the wooded heights of Mount Wellington rising majestically behind it, crowning it sometimes with snow and always with glory, Hobart, as seen from the harbour, is in all seasons, all lights, and all weathers, one of the loveliest sights in the world.

On a nearer knowledge of the Tasmanian capital defects become visible. There are, truth to say, some sorry slums in Hobart; and rags and misery are almost, in proportion, as frequent as in an English town. There is a lack of vigour and of movement in the streets that again reminds one of a country township in England. Such defects are compensated in part, but only in part, by architectural quaintness, and evidence of good taste in the comfortable furniture and good engravings of many an old interior.

But were the defects of Hobart a thousand-fold greater than they are, they would be condoned in the eyes of her visitors by her wealth of lovely and verdant scenery. The olives and yellows and browns of the Australian bush assuredly have their own beauty, and when transfused by distance with blue, by sunset with orange, by moonlight with silver and softness, touch deep emotional chords.

But who that, in fact or fancy, has tasted the

rich delights of English or Irish meadow-greens and tender first-spring hues, can be content without them, or fail to echo Browning's

"Oh to be in England
Now that April's here !"?

At Hobart you can almost feel yourself in England. English trees are about you, English grasses are soft beneath your feet, English flowers sing anthems of peace and contentment from every neat little garden. And to these homely charms are added the glory of serried eucalyptus, of fair fern-tree valleys, unknown to English frosts.*

Owing to its isolated position, Hobart has a reputation for conservatism as well as for beauty. There has been hitherto little municipal activity ; the torpor of individualism has checked all public enterprise. As in the Isle of Wight, or in Jersey, the more active and ambitious among the men are inevitably drawn to the mainland. Hobart is thus to-day very much the 'sleepy hollow' that it was fifty years ago.

Whether federation, giving Tasmanian produce six free markets, will not exert a vivifying influence

* The climate is generally cool, ranging from 20° to 44° in winter, and from 78° to 96° in summer. The mean temperature for the last fifty years is 55°. The average annual rainfall is about 25 inches ; but while Brisbane in 1898,—an exceptionally wet year,—in realizing 60 inches had only 131 wet days, Hobart requires 167 days of rain to produce its normal 25 inches.

on Hobart, it is too early yet to say. But whatever changes are made, Hobartians have no reason for apprehension. Heaven has joined together Hobart and beauty in bonds so strong that no man can put them asunder.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL LIFE IN THE STATES

IN an earlier chapter was sketched the political history of the Australian colonies until the beginning of constitutional government. When the representative system had been conceded, development took very similar lines in all the states. If no colony has shewn Grecian originality in constitution-making, all have shewn English orderliness in constitution-keeping, and more than English common sense in adapting constitutional forms to the changing spirit of the time.

At the eve of the twentieth century each of the six states is found with its Governor and its two Houses ; and the new Federal Constitution, though adding two further deliberative assemblies, and assuming to itself some of the functions hitherto discharged by the state parliaments, does not otherwise interfere with already existing state constitutions.*

* Thus, if—as seems to be a logical outcome of the handing over of many important functions to the Federal Legislature—the

The Lower House is, as is well known, elected in all the states on a popular franchise; women in South and in West Australia, (as in New Zealand), being entitled to a vote. Payment of members is universal, £300 per annum, (and free railway passes), being the highest rate of remuneration,* and £100 the lowest.†

The method of selecting the Upper House differs in the various states. In some the legislative councillors are the nominees of successive ministries;‡ in others they are elected on a small property franchise.§ Victoria and Tasmania give a vote to all university graduates and professional men, irrespective of property. Payment is not given to members of the Upper House, except in South Australia and Tasmania, which pay their Council members and their Assembly members at the same rate.

The Legislative Councils have in all the colonies been as completely eclipsed in power by the Legislative Assemblies as has been the case with their prototype in England; and the Councils'

number of members of the state legislatures is reduced, this reduction can only be accomplished by act of the state legislatures themselves. In South Australia and Victoria reduction has already been accomplished. In the other states it is inevitable in the near future.

* Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland.

† Tasmania. South Australia and Western Australia give £200.

‡ In New South Wales and Queensland.

§ In the other four states.

main claim to existence is the good work they have occasionally done in amending hastily drafted measures sent up from the Lower Houses.

The 'safety-valve of the Constitution,' *i.e.* the appointment of fresh members to bring a refractory Council into submission to the ministry, exists, as in England, in those of the states which have adopted the nominee system, and is not infrequently applied. Improvement of the Upper House, by 'mending or ending,' is, as at home, a stock subject for debating societies, but would seem less in favour with practical politicians, who realize that there is no effective popular demand for such reform.

It is familiar matter of complaint that on the whole the men of culture and the men of wealth have been conspicuous by their absence from Australian public life, and that patriotism, as exhibited in practical politics, has once more become the "last refuge of the scoundrel," while gibes at the venality and incompetence of the national legislators are part of the stock-in-trade of every music-hall and comic journal. The English Parliament is by no means without reproach in these days of furious recriminations and incipient free-fights. But there is, it is pointed out, at least under normal circumstances, a certain sense of decorum, a certain air of dignity and refinement, not unworthy of a House of its historic traditions. Traditions and decorum, it is objected, are alike

lacking in the colonial legislatures. The grossest personalities are repeatedly indulged in, and the most effective speaker is not the orator with the greatest command of logic and of rhetoric, but with the readiest fund of humorous repartee,—the coarser the better.

Such often-heard criticisms contain truth, although they be not wholly true. However it may be with beauty, dignity would seem to require 'a certain size.' It is impossible to expect the same sense of responsibility and self-respect from a small colonial chamber of twenty to sixty members, representing a few hundred thousand electors, as from the historic House of Commons, with its representation of millions and with the fortunes of an empire hanging on its counsels. The proverb that asserts no man to be a hero to his valet is not invalidated by the fact that this is a country in which the professional valet can hardly be said to exist; for every politician has the temptation to constitute himself every other politician's valet. Thus, if a parliamentary leader has inadvertently neglected to pay his washing-bill, or loses his temper to a domestic, or forgets the straight path homeward, it is not very long before he comes to hear of it in the House. In the vastness of London the private life of members, so long as they abstain from any noisy violation of established codes of morality, is not a matter of knowledge nor of interest to other members. In the relatively

confined area of a colonial centre, no personal detail is too trivial to form the subject for an interjection calculated to spoil the effect of an oratorical period. The extent to which the Speakers of the colonial assemblies allow such interjections and interruptions passes belief. It would scarcely be too much to say that three consecutive sentences seldom fall from a speaker's lips without these unmannerly,—often unmanly,—punctuations. A stranger introduced into a colonial legislature for the first time, might almost be persuaded to believe that it was the comic chorus of seated members that were speaking, and that the member on his feet was only episodically filling in the pauses of their remarks.

It is obvious that such laxity ought to militate exceedingly against the deliberative efficiency of the chamber that allows it. And yet—and yet—the fact remains that all the colonial assemblies have done, and are doing, capable work. They have anticipated the English Parliament in inaugurating practical schemes for old-age pensions; they have, particularly in New South Wales, placed excellent Early Closing Acts on the statute book; they have done much to reform the land-laws and to promote closer settlement. In Victoria a Minimum-Wage Act is in force; and New South Wales has emulated New Zealand in carrying a wise measure to secure compulsory arbitration in labour disputes. South Australia was first to pass an Act conferring the

vote on women, while Tasmania has in force an equitable system of proportional representation.*

So, after all, the conversational method must have its advantages. If it is dangerous to logical coherence, it is fatal to bombast; and the average speech of a colonial chamber, if less eloquent and less polished, is briefer and more business-like than the speeches of the House of Commons.

As to the alleged venality of colonial legislatures, it is not safe to attach entire credence to the exaggerations of the comic papers, or to the *ex parte* statements of conservative citizens who profess to have washed their hands of politics as of an unclean thing. The admitted presence of men of undoubted honesty and of tried ability,—in however small a minority,—in all the colonial parliaments, is a sufficient guarantee that no disgraceful ‘job’ shall be perpetrated without the public being duly informed. The chief ground for the too frequently parroted charges of venality is in the existence of

* It is not within the scope of this book to examine these measures in detail, nor need the text be taken to imply that all are unquestionable successes. At the same time none are notorious failures, and an excellent case can be made out for most of them. (*Vide* W. P. REEVES: *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*.) It is interesting to notice in how many instances of such progressive legislation the propertied classes have begun by prophesying ruin, and ended by accepting the innovation as a matter of course. Thus the radicalism of one decade becomes the conservatism of the next, and lawyers expend the residue of the energy with which they have proved a new Act to be unworkable, in making it work.

the 'roads and bridges member,'—the man who obtains his position by promises of local improvements, and whose main efforts in the House are directed towards securing by 'lobbying' and other methods the redemption of a sufficient percentage of such promises to induce a 'sporting' constituency to 'try their luck' with him again at the next election. If this be venality, it is venality in a comparatively innocuous and in a transient form. In a country like Australia, of vast geographical extent and unlimited possibilities, it is only natural that each locality should think that it is but the construction of one or two necessary public works that is required to make that locality at once the richest and the most creditable portion of the continent. Nor is it less natural that the electors should choose to represent them a man who shares their views in this respect, and is prepared to put them to the test of reality. Although individual 'jobs' may be compassed, here and there a bridge built where no considerable public need exists, here and there a railway made with no immediate prospect of public reimbursement, on the whole the claims of conflicting localities secure at least a rough approximation to the fair treatment of all. Moreover, as the railway system becomes more and more complete, as the all too few rivers become adequately bridged, the 'roads and bridges member' will gradually find his occupation gone.

The defects of Australian parliaments are usually attributed by their critics to the institution of payment of members. Their inadequate payment would perhaps be a truer cause of what deficiency there may be. It is to be sincerely regretted that none of the colonies has tried the experiment of entrusting the Government to, say fifteen men at £1000 a year, instead of to fifty or sixty at £300. For the plain fact is, that in a new country, where no indirect advantage of prestige attaches to a seat in the national councils, if men of first-rate ability are required, they will have to be paid accordingly. Public spirit and personal vanity will no doubt sometimes send into the parliamentary arena men who are financially independent. But such must needs be a small minority. In the main the 'amateur' politician, a decreasing factor in the English Parliament, scarcely exists in the colonial assemblies.

If, then, it is on the professional politician that the colonies are to rely, (and the profession of politics is at least as worthy a calling as any other), his average ability will depend upon the relative rates of remuneration, in 'net advantages,' of politics and of other professions. Now, there can be little doubt that, with the possible exception of teaching, — that 'noblest of professions, and worst of trades,' — politics, of all callings, offers the least pecuniary reward in proportion to services rendered. Can we expect a

man of first-rate ability, and not more than ordinary altruistic instincts, to content himself with £300 a year, and the hazy prospect of ultimate office, when he knows that by applying himself to mercantile pursuits, to medicine, or to the bar, he may reasonably anticipate at any rate five times that income?

Democracy all over the world is gradually discovering that, if it wants able service, it must pay for it at fair rates. It was natural at first that constituencies, mainly consisting of men to whom £300 a year would be affluence, should consider that an ample sum to pay their legislators. But such an income is only a prize to the artisan classes. Thus it is only they who send a fair proportion of their ablest men to Parliament. A doctor, a merchant, or a barrister, must have proved an egregious failure in minding his own business before he will be content with £300 a year for minding other people's. Australian democracies have already reconciled themselves to paying good salaries to their town clerks, commissioners for railways, and university professors. It is only one step further adequately to remunerate their legislators.

Australians of the future will blush to think how ill their country has requited those who have given their lives to her service. The successful publican, doctor, merchant, barrister,—these surely have not done more for Australia

than a statesman like Sir Henry Parkes. Yet on these she has showered fortunes and honours, to them flings open the doors of Government House; while poor Sir Henry is thrown a careless crust, and lectured on the virtues of economy. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that there is not an Australian premier of note who has not died in poverty.

Not the least of the benefits hoped for from federation is the gradual attraction into public life of the most competent men in the country. The salary offered is, indeed, not much higher than that attached to membership of the state assemblies.* But it was anticipated that the larger field of action, the greater responsibilities and opportunities, would attract into the Federal Parliament men who would not have been willing to make the personal sacrifice involved, for a seat in a state chamber. Such anticipations were not altogether realized at the first federal elections. The candidates for the Federal Parliament were largely drawn from members or ex-members of the state Assemblies.† And the majority of the exceptions were nonentities. But there was a

* The rate of pay is £400 a year for members of each House, and free railway transit.

† Of the 36 elected senators, 25 have been members of the state parliaments, 10 of these being ex-ministers. Of the 75 members of the Federal House of Representatives, 57 have been members of state legislative councils or assemblies; 27 having been

handful of able men who had identified themselves with the Federal movement, but had played no part in state politics: these and the better of the ex-state politicians should suffice to give the first Federal Parliament a nucleus of ability and of self-respect which will do something to raise at once the tone of political life and the status of the politician.*

It is difficult for an English student of colonial institutions to rid himself of English methods of thought and expression. Thus the author of the interesting article on recent New Zealand legislation just quoted, cannot disentangle himself from the old-country notions of 'liberal' and 'conservative.' There is nothing approaching a conservative party in any of the colonies, the term 'liberal' being claimed by both rival parties, whatever be the line of demarcation. What this line is, varies in the different states; but in

ex-ministers. Of the senators, twelve are lawyers; the rest are of various occupations,—one a market-gardener, one a publican, several pastoralists, merchants, and journalists, and eight labour members. Of the representatives, fourteen are lawyers, one a clergyman, one a doctor, ten labour men, and eleven who are not ashamed to acknowledge politics as their profession, not a mere *πάρεργον*.

* "As usual, democracy disproved the favourite calumny of its detractors by selecting, on the whole, the ablest of those offering. Mr. B. R. Wise and Mr. Ashton, on the protectionist and free trade sides respectively, were the only notable exceptions; and in each case exceptional causes were at work to account for their rejection" (Mr. TREVELYAN, in the *New Liberal Review*, March, 1901).

most the division has hitherto been into free-traders and protectionists. This will now be the main division in the Federal Parliament. But the question is complicated by the adherence of several free-traders to the protectionist party led by Mr. Barton, and by the necessity, in accordance with the financial clauses of the Constitution, of raising for some years a very considerable sum by customs and excise. It is thus curious to note that, for want of some rallying-word to separate the 'ins' from the 'outs,' the issue of 'free trade *v.* protection' was in most of the states* made the battle-cry for the election of a parliament which was by the nature of the case precluded from approaching either. A terrible pother was made over the Bartonian tariff, but the loudest advocates of free trade know secretly that if the devising of the tariff had fallen to Mr. Reid, the result would have been almost identical.

Still more anomalous is the position of parties in the state parliaments. The whole matter of the fiscal policy of Australia has been by federation entirely removed from the sphere of state politics. And yet Mr. (now Sir John) See's

* In Queensland, however, the election was mainly fought on the question of the employment of Kanaka labour in the sugar plantations. In no states was the question of protection *v.* free trade so all-important as in the rival leading states of Victoria and New South Wales, the former strongly protectionist, the latter a convert to free trade.

suggestion of a coalition ministry in the New South Wales Parliament was angrily rejected by the free-trade leaders; and it was decided that the division 'free trade *v.* protection' should be kept up in the State Parliament, in spite of the fact that that Parliament has no more to do with the question than it has with the nebular hypothesis. Mr. Bernhard Wise, the New South Wales Attorney-General, has expressed his conviction that the electors are too shrewd to "put their money on a scratched horse." But the difficulty is, that if the party division into free-traders *v.* protectionists be abandoned, it is almost impossible to find any other line of demarcation. It will be most interesting to watch whether the fiscal ghost will still haunt the state chamber, or whether an attempt will be gradually made towards the abolition of party government.

Although, as has been said, the name is not in favour, conservatism is, as is natural with an English people, strong throughout Australia. Indeed, nothing is more striking in Australian history than the extremely conservative spirit in which all reforms have been undertaken.

Socialism is, perhaps, next to conservatism, the strongest characteristic of Australian legislation; but the name is even more unpopular than conservatism, and, as a party, the avowed socialists have always taken a rank unworthy of serious attention.

What, then, may perhaps be called a Conservative Socialism* is the creed, or, at least, the public profession of faith, of both parties in all colonial parliaments; but both parties are content to hide alike their socialism and their conservatism under the pleasing and almost meaningless title of 'liberalism,' a 'blessed word' vaguely suggesting to the average elector liberty to do as he likes with liberal supplies of Government money.

It is objected that the leaders of political parties are not invariably in full sympathy with the reforms they advocate; that when the public opinion of the colony clearly proclaims itself in favour of some new measure, the one party vies with the other in promising to secure its enactment. But however reprehensible it may be that politicians should here, as elsewhere, trim their sails to popular favour, yet with so sane a body of electors, opportunism, unless to the statesman's own conscience, does the minimum of harm. Never was a populace less emotional, less extreme, more amenable to the argument of fact.

It is not claimed that Australian electors are of abnormal intelligence. The fact that in one of the leading states no less than 21 per cent. of those who

* Socialism, in that it extends the functions of government indefinitely, so long as good seems likely to accrue; conservative, in that it proceeds tentatively in such extension, respecting 'vested interests.' The Australian democracy, in fact, advances, but it advances backwards, to disguise from the timid the fact that it does advance.

voted for the Federal Senate recorded informal votes, seems decisive on this point.* Only that they are shrewd in seeing their own interests, and moderate in their measures to secure them, good-humoured in victory and good-humoured in defeat.

Australians have been censured as too ready to yield to press guidance ; and the temptation to have one's political thinking done for one at a penny a day does, no doubt, prove irresistible to many,—in Australia as in more experienced countries. But the main argument adduced in support of this criticism,—that in New South Wales, where both metropolitan dailies took the same side, the public largely obeyed their instructions, electing five out of the six candidates advocated by them for the Senate,—must be balanced by the considerations (1) that in Victoria, where the leading dailies took opposite sides, the voting was almost as one-sided as in New South Wales, only in the opposite direction ; (2) that New South Wales was at the time very prosperous ; (3) that the electors had long been assured, and were almost convinced, that their prosperity was entirely due to free trade ; and (4) that they were accordingly determined to vote for the free-trade candidates who had the best chance of election. Such were,

* The intelligence of the authorities, who required, there being some fifty candidates, that the names of the forty-four not-voted-for should be crossed-out, rather than that the names of the six voted-for be marked,—was even more conspicuous by its absence.

clearly, those supported by the central free-trade organization, and, as such, advocated by the free-trade journals. The five free-trade senators elected were, in fact, elected as free-traders, not as nominees of the Sydney press.

The numbers of electors who, alike in the Federal Referendum and in the first election, did not trouble to record their votes, must be taken as proof that the 'idiotes,'—the total abstainer from public spirit,—exists even in these favoured communities. Even those who vote are often apathetic. There is, as a rule, little enthusiasm about an Australian election. Possibly it is the very fact of general welfare that has conduced to political apathy. The oppressed 'masses' of an European state are driven to political activity by their wrongs. But in Australia there are no oppressed masses. Much, indeed, yet remains to do before all are afforded approximately equal opportunities of a useful and happy existence. But the conditions of life are already sufficiently pleasant to the majority, for there to be no widespread discontent to rouse to political action.

The working classes are only gradually waking to a sense of their power in politics. For years they preferred the method of 'collective bargaining' to that of 'legal enactment,' and looked solely to their trades unions for the amelioration of labour-conditions. They are now beginning to realize the immense political force given them by manhood

suffrage, if they care to use it. The process is, however, slow, and retarded by internal discussions. The number of labour members is by no means proportionate to that of labour electors, who frequently prefer candidates outside their own class, knowing from experience how soon the labour member, when elected, tends to assimilate himself to the middle-class representatives. Still, in some of the states, proper organization has already done great things for the labour party,—their most notable recent achievement being the capture in Queensland of four out of six seats for the Federal Senate, and seven out of nine in the Federal House of Representatives.*

Of the middle class, many thousands are content to mind 'their own affairs,' with no great opinion of the politicians on either side, but with the good easy conviction that, whichever party is elected is not likely to interfere materially with their own private prosperity. Such apathy seems particularly common among the well-to-do. There is among them a tendency to an exaggerated contempt for public life, and an inadequate perception of the fact that if, as they say, their representatives are unworthy, the fault is in large measure their own, and the remedy is still, in large measure, their own,

* The voting in Queensland was not large, it being estimated that not more than one-third of the electors recorded their votes for the Federal Parliament. It need hardly be said that the Queensland labour party's representation in the Federal Parliament bears no relation whatever to that in the State Legislature.

too. Theoretically, no doubt, one man has but one vote ; practically, however, as every one knows, money, education, talent, must always count for much, and these abstainers from politics could, if they chose, exercise an influence on the history of Australia out of all proportion to their numerical strength.

So long as the colonies were disunited,—struggling states haggling over petty tariff and precedency disputes,—there was, perhaps, some pretext for the 'idiotes' attitude. But what excuse can be found for the Australian whose heart is not with the deliberations of the first national Parliament of Australia ?

CHAPTER VI

THE FEDERAL MOVEMENT

AUSTRALIAN federation is really a reaction from Australian separation. England from the first had found it difficult to realize the geographical and circumstantial differences that parted the young colonies. No two colonies, for instance, could well have been more dissimilar in origin than New South Wales and South Australia; and it was inevitable that each should desire to mould its own destinies. But if England was prone to underestimate the actual distance, Australia was prone to ignore the relative nearness of her component colonies. The noble lord who, when asked where South Australia was, replied, "Somewhere near Botany Bay," was, no doubt, from the positive standpoint, inaccurate; for a distance of five or six hundred miles can hardly be held to constitute nearness; relatively speaking, however, he was perfectly right. So far as political, social, and commercial life is concerned, South Australia, despite the five or six hundred miles that part

their capitals, is assuredly 'somewhere near' New South Wales; and there is, in proportion, despite geographical distance, about as much intercourse to-day between Sydney and Adelaide, or Sydney and Melbourne, as there is between Manchester and London.

The idea of Australian federal union is English in its origin, and it is Earl Grey, and not Sir Henry Parkes, who is most legitimately honoured as the 'Father of Federation.' Not that it is to be supposed that this conscientious but unpopular statesman, the *bête noire* of Wakefield and other progressive spirits, was possessed of such political prescience as to have foreseen the actual lines of federal development. But as early as 1847 we find him writing: "Some method will be devised for enabling the legislatures of the several Australian colonies to co-operate with each other in the enactment of such laws as may be necessary for regulating the interests common to those possessions collectively,—such, for example, as the imposition of duties of import and export, the conveyance of letters, etc." And he speaks of the "creation of a central legislative authority for the whole of the Australian colonies." Australia, however, indignantly rejected his suggestions. Any scheme for Australian union to be acceptable to Australians must emanate from Australia herself.

Nothing speaks more highly for the tact of the home authorities,—who, *pace* much natural and

valuable colonial criticism, have, on the whole, deserved conspicuously well, both of England and of the colonies,—than the fact that the Government at once gave way to Australian opposition, leaving the colonies to rediscover for themselves, in the fulness of time, the absolute necessity of a “central legislative assembly,” if Australia were ever to be more than a term of geographical convenience. For the time, although a detailed scheme for a central Australian assembly was submitted to the English Parliament, and fully discussed there, yet, eventually, the Act providing for the separation of Victoria was passed without any of the federal clauses. It was, however, anticipated in England that the colonies would of themselves gradually combine for legislative purposes much sooner than was actually the case. The Governor of New South Wales had for many years the official title of Governor-General of Australia. But the implied hegemony of the mother-colony was distasteful to the younger members of the Australian family, and after 1861 this shadow of a pious aspiration towards federal union was entirely removed.

Meanwhile, there were not wanting Australian statesmen who, while distrusting Earl Grey and his colleagues *et dona ferentes*, were by no means insensible to the advantages of a federation if they might have the devising of it. The Rev. Dr. Lang, early Presbyterian minister in the colony, produced in 1852 a complete scheme of federal union,

together with what some considered, and consider, its logical consequence,—complete separation from England. W. C. Wentworth, a prominent figure in early Australian politics, soon became a partial convert to his views, drafting a Bill and submitting it in 1857 to Mr. Labouchere, the Secretary of State for the colonies. That gentleman judged, however, not unreasonably, that the scheme was premature. In the same year, through the influence of Messrs. Gavan Duffy and Deas-Thomson, select committees were held both in Victoria and in New South Wales, and subsequently in South Australia. But intercolonial distrust was already a political fact; and the separation of Queensland, two years later, shewed that the decentralizing tendency was not yet exhausted. The zealots for federation, notably Mr. Duffy, did not allow themselves to be discouraged, and endeavoured for many years to pave the way to federal union by the adoption of an uniform tariff. But beyond the assembling of a series of intercolonial conferences to settle special questions wherein from time to time common agreement was required, little progress was made. In 1867, at the most important of these conferences, Mr. Henry Parkes eloquently announced his faith in federation. "I believe," he said, "that this occasion will inevitably lead to a more permanent federal understanding. I do not mean to say that when you leave this room to-night, you will see a new constellation of six stars in the heavens. I do

not startle your imagination by asking you to look for the footprints of six young giants in the morning dew, when the night rolls away ; but this I feel certain of, that the mother-country will regard this congress of the colonies just in the same light as a father and mother may view the conduct of their children when they first observe those children beginning to look out for homes and connections for themselves." But for a long time, partly through the action of the home Government,* partly through the inherent difficulties of united action,† the prophecy seemed but the utterance of a visionary enthusiast. In 1881, Parkes himself declared his conviction that "the time is not come for the construction of a Federal Constitution," but advocated the immediate creation of a non-fiscal Federal Council. This council actually came into being in 1885 ; but its limited powers, and the abstention of New South Wales, made it a halting creature from the first, and its death in Melbourne, in 1899, found few mourners.

That 'ultimate human question,' "Of us two, am I to kill you, or you me?" is as applicable to nations as to individuals. It is not fraternal sentiment, but the instinct of self-preservation that has promoted most political agreements. So long as the Australian colonies seemed able by their aloofness from the centres of civilization

* QUICK and GARRAN : *Annotated Constitution*, p. 104.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 105-107.

to live secure, without concerning themselves with European powers, federation remained a dream in the minds of statesmen. But when came rumours of war to the Golden Continent, when French and German activity in the Pacific warned Australian colonists that nations help themselves to other nations that will not help themselves, then federation became embodied, no longer an abstract theory, but a definite scheme for practical politicians.

In 1889 Major-General Edwards had, in consequence of the 'scare,' been sent out from England to inspect the colonial forces. In addition to his detailed report, he submitted a memorandum strongly recommending "the federation of the forces of all the Australian colonies." Sir Henry Parkes, with his sensitive finger ever on the public pulse, and his silver tongue miraculously responsive to the finger's message, judged that the time was come for an appeal to the people in favour of federal union. To secure the colonies from foreign aggression, every one admitted was of the first importance ; for that purpose the home expert had considered the federation of the colonial forces highly desirable ; in order to federate colonial forces some kind of federal union was indispensable. Sir Henry Parkes accordingly advocated a "Convention of the leading men from all the colonies," to devise a Constitution and bring into existence a Federal Parliament. As a step towards

this, a conference took place at Melbourne between the members of the Federal Council and representatives of New South Wales and New Zealand.* This body recommended a National Convention, as suggested by Sir Henry; and, the consent of the several parliaments having been obtained, a representative Convention met at Sydney in 1891, and proceeded to formulate a Constitution. The result of the labours of the Sydney Convention must not be undervalued. Though the Draft Bill drawn up by them never passed into law, it formed the basis of the Bill which eventually secured acceptance, it afforded a definite scheme for discussion, educated public opinion, and shewed the world that Australia already possessed statesmen capable of framing a reasonable Constitution.

And yet it is not surprising that the Bill of 1891 was shelved by the colonial parliaments. In the first place, from the days of the Long Parliament, no parliament has liked to sanction aught derogatory to its own authority. Now it was quite clear that if the Federal Parliament was to become an accomplished fact, the power and prestige of the state legislatures would be materially diminished, probably their numbers reduced. It is contrary to human nature for a man to be anxious to abolish

* It was at a banquet in honour of the assembling of this conference that Sir Henry Parkes made use of the famous phrase, "The crimson thread of kinship runs through us all" (*Annotated Constitution*, p. 119).

his own salary. In the second place, public opinion was not decidedly in favour of the Bill. The Labour Party was especially shy of it. In the weaker, decentralized parliaments they would, they thought, have more chance of carrying social legislation than in a strong central assembly of the collective wisdom of the 'classes.' This attitude was not unreasonable. Certainly the Labour Party have won by waiting; they have both exercised more influence on the state parliaments than they would have hoped to exercise on a Federal Legislature, and they have secured in the present Act a considerably more democratic Constitution.

Sir Henry Parkes' government was ousted from power in October, 1891, without succeeding in carrying any expression of approval of the Bill through the New South Wales Parliament. And the succeeding administration, that of Sir George Dibbs, was even more apathetic, if not antipathetic. While New South Wales only played with the Bill, it availed little for the other colonies to take it seriously.

A brilliant idea now struck Sir Henry Parkes: despairing of the willing adoption of any Bill by state parliaments, he advocated following the example of the original American states, and placing the matter in the hands of the electors. The people themselves should have the choosing of those entrusted with the task of drawing up a Federal Constitution. At the time the suggestion

fell flat ; and federation seemed, to use a prominent federalist's phrase, "as dead as Julius Cæsar."*

New South Wales politicians had done their best to smother the Bill. But the people now began to respond to agitations in favour of the federal movement. These agitations were mainly conducted by the Australian Natives' Association,† and by federal leagues, and they exercised a wide educational influence. A conference at Corowa in 1893 is notable, because at it Dr. Quick of Bendigo suggested the important step of the passing of Enabling Acts in the different colonies, providing for the popular election of Convention representatives to prepare an amended Bill, and for the decision, by popular referendum, of the question whether the Bill, as amended, should, or should not, be adopted. In 1894 Mr. G. H. Reid, on succeeding Sir George Dibbs as Premier, professed his adhesion to the federal principle, and, calling a conference of Australian premiers, carried resolutions substantially embodying Dr. Quick's suggestion of Enabling Acts and a popular Referendum.

* Sir John Robertson was the author of the phrase, which, during the federal campaign, was cleverly turned for his own purposes by Mr. Barton, who pointed out that the murderers of Julius Cæsar were not in all respects commendable, and, moreover, that if Cæsar died, Cæsarism lived on.

† It is rather an interesting tribute to English ignorance of the colonies that the editor of the well-known English magazine in which this chapter first appeared, thought it necessary to explain that the Australian Natives' Association was not composed of aboriginal blacks.

The Reid Government now busied itself with fiscal matters, and succeeded in introducing into New South Wales a nearer approximation to free trade than any other colony has ever undergone. The Enabling Act was, however, passed, with surprisingly little opposition, in December, 1895. South Australia, Victoria, and Tasmania, followed suit. In Queensland the two Houses disagreed; but Western Australia gave in a conditional adherence. After an unofficial popular Convention at Bathurst, which roused considerable interest, the Convention elections took place in March, 1897, and resulted in the choice of fifty men, thoroughly representative of the political intelligence of Australia,—all, or nearly all, strongly in favour of federation on lines similar to those of the previous Bill.

When the delegates assembled at Adelaide, (March 22nd, 1897), Mr. Barton, who had been returned at the head of the poll for New South Wales, with nearly a hundred thousand votes, was chosen as leader of the Convention, and it was decided to draft a fresh Bill. On April 22nd the result of the labours of the various committees appeared in the first draft of a Constitution. On September 2nd, (the sitting having been postponed till then to enable the premiers to attend the Queen's Diamond Jubilee), the Convention met at Sydney, and proceeded to improve the draft Bill to meet the criticisms which had been meanwhile

passed upon it by the state legislatures in the form of nearly three hundred suggested amendments. The final session of the Convention took place in Melbourne in the beginning of 1898, and the Constitution Bill was now ready to be referred to the people for acceptance or rejection.

The Referendum of 1898 was the cause of considerable excitement in New South Wales, where opposition was strong. The votes shewed a majority in favour of the Bill, but as the number voting for it did not reach the eighty thousand minimum stipulated by an amended Enabling Act, the result was tantamount to a rejection of the Bill. This caused disappointment in the other voting colonies, which had all accepted it by substantial majorities. Mr. Reid, the New South Wales Premier, who had voted for the Bill, but spoken against it,—a paradoxical position which, under the name of the 'Yes-No policy,' afforded the *Bulletin* much scope for effective caricature,—now seized his opportunity. He suggested a conference of premiers to consider amendments with a view to render the Bill more acceptable to New South Wales.* The premiers responded but

* The writer was present at a great meeting in Sydney, at which Mr. Reid brought forward this proposal. An amusing instance occurred of the then Premier's unrivalled gift of popular repartee. "Mr. Reid," shouted a raucous voice from the gallery, "in the event of the other premiers refusing to meet you, what would you do?" Mr. Reid, without an instant's hesitation, turned on the inquirer, and said in his monotonous, high-pitched tones,

coldly ; a general election was soon to take place in New South Wales, as the result of which, Mr. Barton, and not Mr. Reid, might be Premier. When, however, Mr. Reid had come victorious from the polls, (though with a reduced majority), and had carried resolutions through the House, making it clear in what respects he wished the Bill amended, the premiers of the six * Australian colonies met at Melbourne, and conceded Mr. Reid, on behalf of New South Wales, much, though not all, that he asked.† On June 20th, 1899, the second Referendum took place in New South Wales, and, the numbers being 107,420 for, and 82,741 against, the Bill was declared carried. The other colonies, (except Western Australia, which still hung back), as soon as the result in New South Wales was known, passed the amended Bill by majorities aggregating over two hundred thousand.

It only remained to secure the Imperial assent, and a delegation, with Mr. Barton at its head, was despatched to London for the purpose of watching the Bill through Parliament. Arriving at Westminster in March, 1900, they found that the

audible in every corner, "Sir, in that most lamentable,—and, may I add, most unlikely,—contingency, I should *consult you*." The meeting was convulsed, and the inquirer subsided.

* Including Queensland and Western Australia, which had not yet submitted the Bill to the popular vote.

† In especial, it was conceded that the federal capital should be in New South Wales, though not within a hundred miles of Sydney.

objections of the Imperial Government mainly centred round the judicial clauses which restricted the right to Privy Council appeal. After considerable friction,—the delegates maintaining that they were empowered in no way to alter the Bill,—a compromise was arrived at,* the Bill was brought by Mr. Chamberlain before an interested and cordial House, passed amid cheers, and on July 9th, 1900, duly received the Royal assent,—the last, but not the least, important document signed by Queen Victoria.†

It would be to lay claim to a characteristic undesirable and essentially un-English to ascribe any great originality to the Australian Federal Constitution; for original constitutions seldom long survive their origin, while it has been a persistent quality of the English people, wherever dwelling, never to make a new law when the same result can be obtained by reinterpreting an old, and to distrust even a reasonable innovation unless it wear an ancient mask. He, then, that would look for a brand-new Constitution, leaping full-grown from the head of Mr. Barton, will be disappointed.

* The compromise reached was that an appeal from the new Australian High Court to the Privy Council, on any purely Australian constitutional point, should only take place at the desire of the said High Court.

† The federation was made complete by the accession, at the eleventh hour, of Western Australia,—the only outstanding state,—where a Referendum, taken on July 31st, 1900, resulted in an unexpectedly large majority in favour of union.

The roots of the Australian Constitution are to be found, not in Australia and the critical nineteenth century, not even, altogether, in England and the creative thirteenth century, but in the earliest recorded ages of the Aryan race, when Homeric monarchs consulted their Councils, while Thersites aired his lungs in the Assemblies. All these three elements,—king, council, assembly,—have their counterparts, (however changed are their respective rôles), in the Australian Constitution.

The strictly federal element is of later growth. Nor is this matter of surprise, for federation involves a somewhat complex political conception of dual citizenship. The citizen of a state joining a federation does not cease, in becoming a citizen of the federation, from being a citizen of the state. The states agree for certain purposes to unite permanently into a nation, and devise a permanent machinery for those purposes; but they still keep their individuality, and each retains its own governmental machinery for the performance of all functions which have not been handed over to the federation.

The nations of ancient Greece, in all but size an instructive analogue to the Australian states,—they, too, being communities of men of one race, religion, and speech, politically independent, and free to develope, each on its own lines,—formed no distinct federal union till after the crown of the world had irrevocably fallen from the brows

of Hellas. In 280, B.C., however, we find in the Achæan League a true example of federation, which, though somewhat crude in form, bestowed good government on a large part of Greece for nearly a century and a half. Meanwhile, infant Rome had already strangled the nascent federation of the thirty cities of Latium; and a like fate had overtaken other incipient federal organizations in ancient Italy.

After the decay of the republic, the formal extension of the Imperial Roman franchise to the provinces accustomed men to the idea of a dual citizenship, though distance prevented it from being more than an idea. On the fall of the Empire the germs of federal developement were trampled beneath the steps of triumphant feudalism. No more was heard of them for a thousand years, though we may see a federal analogy in the dual relationship of a feudal vassal to his lord and to his king.

The mediæval leagues of cities, such as the Lombardic, the Rhenish, and the Hanseatic, were rather temporary commercial alliances than real federations. The same was at first the case with the Swiss league, which, however, later developed into a truer federal union.

We come to the verge of modern history with the Confederation,* in 1579, of the Dutch provinces,

* By a Confederation, as distinct from a Federation, is meant a weaker bond of union, wherein the citizens of the states have no

soon to make their glorious struggle for liberty against regal oppression. Two hundred years later the American Constitution applied the federal idea to the English governmental system as then existing, or as understood by the then lawyers to exist. The German Federation of 1871 shewed federal union to be not incompatible with monarchy, while the Federation of Canada in 1867 provided the first instance of such an union under the English crown.

"During the closing years of the eighteenth century," a recent writer well sums up the position, "federal government was the monopoly of the scattered settlements on the eastern shores of America. But the United States . . . have developed into a vast, powerful, and populous republic; Switzerland was federated in 1848, Germany in 1871, Canada in 1867. Thus, within a hundred years of the adoption of a form of government by certain remote colonies, that form has been embraced by half the self-governing population of the world."*

The Australian Federal Constitution, which, since the above was written, has added another to the world's federations, owes much to its predecessors, especially to the United States and part in the federal government, but the federal body exerts its authority merely through the governments of the several states. (*Vide* R. R. GARRAN: *The Coming Commonwealth*.)

* *The New Democracy*, by Professor JETHRO BROWN, late Professor of Law and History in the University of Tasmania, p. 146.

Canada; but it claims to have carried democratic principles further than has ever been attempted in any previous Constitution. The main difficulty of the constitution-builders was the divergent history and characteristics of the different states: some were larger than others, some were richer, some were more populous; some had borrowed much, others less; some had adopted highly protective systems, others approximated to free trade. Had these differences not existed, probably the best step would have been a complete unification, such as took place when the English heptarchic states were welded into one, or such as took place some thousand years later, in the Britain of the South, on the abolition of the provinces.* But although a scheme of Australian unification was seriously proposed,† it was never seriously supported; for it was realized that no one of the colonies would be willing to give up its individuality.

The first necessity, then, in the Constitution was to secure the inviolable individuality of the states, and especially to guard against the swamping of the small states by the large. On a population basis, New South Wales, for example, would be entitled to nearly eight times as many members in the Legislature as little Tasmania, or as vast, but

* The Provincial System was abolished in New Zealand in 1876. (REEVES: *Long White Cloud*, pp. 328, 329.)

† By Sir George Dibbs. For details of scheme, *vide* QUICK and GARRAN, p. 155.

sparsely peopled, Western Australia. But it was hopeless to expect either of the latter colonies to come into a Federation on such terms. Accordingly the framers of the Constitution had recourse to the device adopted by the American republic, and, while maintaining the principle of proportional representation in the House of Representatives, gave each state the same number of members in the Senate.

The fiscal difficulty was met with a less satisfactory solution, responsible for much of the hostility displayed to the Bill. By the clause suggested by Sir Edward Braddon, then Premier of Tasmania, and in general somewhat ungraciously referred to as the 'Braddon Blot,' it was decided that the federal expenses should be met by customs and excise duties in the following way. To obviate the pecuniary difficulties in which the states would have been involved if, while inter-state duties were abolished, other customs and excise were devoted solely to the federal expenses, it was provided that only one-fourth of the proceeds of the said customs and excise should be devoted to federal purposes, the remaining three-fourths being restored to the individual states in proportion to their actual contributions.* By this device inter-colonial free trade was indeed assured; but the

* This for five years after the imposition of an uniform tariff; afterwards in such proportions as shall seem fair to the Federal Parliament. Western Australia was allowed five years in which to abolish its intercolonial duties.

fact that four times as much customs revenue was to be raised as was required for federal purposes,—that is to say, an annual sum of eight to ten million pounds,—made extra-colonial protection not less certain.

The Braddon clause really satisfied few people in Australia ; but though many objected, none was able to suggest a scheme that was not yet more objectionable. So New South Wales was perforce content, with the other colonies, to adopt it, with Mr. Reid's proviso that at the end of ten years the whole matter should come up for reconsideration. Meanwhile, the financial clauses secure one main object of federation,—the sweeping away of all inter-state barriers. The first duty of the Parliament opened at Melbourne by the heir-apparent, has been to impose an uniform tariff in the name, not of scattered and mutually jealous colonies, but of an united Australia.

The question of the division of functions between the federal and the state parliaments is settled in the Australian Constitution by the opposite device to that which was adopted by Canada. Under the Canadian Federation the national Parliament has within its province all functions not assigned to the state legislatures ; under the Australian Constitution the state parliaments are left all functions that are not expressly assigned to the national legislature.* To the

* But the national legislature may at any time add to its

Federal Parliament are entrusted the regulation of taxation, trade, defence, borrowing,* postal services; the states retain control of education, public works, the railways,† and the provincial administration of justice.

In the event of the clashing of federal and state legislature, a 'Guardian' or 'Interpreter' of the Constitution is supplied by the new Australian High Court, which will determine whether in any particular case either legislature has acted *ultra vires*, and from which to the Privy Council, appeals, as has been seen, will only be allowed at the desire of the High Court itself.

The question of the amendment of the Constitution is of even more importance. For the amending authority is, in the juridical sense, the Sovereign, (although, in Dicey's phrase, a monarch 'that slumbers and sleeps'), superior even to the Constitution itself. The framers of the Australian Federation endeavoured to make the Constitution sufficiently 'rigid' for security, sufficiently 'flexible' for progress. They followed current English political thought in considering that the American system, (under which, as is well known, only fifteen amendments have been passed in nearly eight times that number of years), erred on the functions, adopting the ordinary procedure laid down for the amendment of the Constitution.

* But the states may still borrow on their own credit.

† But the Commonwealth can take over the railways with the consent of the states.

side of rigidity. They therefore laid it down that an amendment to the Constitution should become law if carried by an absolute majority in both federal Houses, and confirmed by popular referendum.*

Both Houses of the Federal Parliament have equal rights of initiating legislation, except that money bills must originate in the House of Representatives. The members of the two Houses † are remunerated at the rate of £400 a year, tenure of office lasting for three years in the House of Representatives, six years in the Senate.‡ Both Houses are elective, the franchise to be that obtaining in each colony for the election of the legislative assembly, until the Federal Parliament shall itself fix a franchise.§ Provision is made for the settlement of possible deadlocks by the device of a double dissolution, followed by a joint sitting of the two Houses, an absolute majority to be final.

Such are the main provisions of the Constitution Act of the Australian Commonwealth, so far

* The Referendum having to shew a majority in favour of the proposed amendment both in the whole Commonwealth and in the greater number of the states.

† The members are to be: in the Senate, six for each colony; in the House of Representatives, twice the total number of the Senate, in proportion to population.

‡ Half the senators to retire every third year.

§ Which must not, however, be more restrictive than that of any state. Mr. Barton has already declared himself for adult suffrage. [Since this was written, women have been given the franchise in all federal elections.]

as a long and complicated document can be conveniently summarized.* It must be for posterity,—the unnumbered millions to whom Sir George Grey so loved to allude,—to decide how far it is the “monument of political wisdom” which Mr. Chamberlain declared it to be when he introduced it to the British Parliament.

Being of human origin, the Bill is not perfect. That, Federalists will admit. Being a Bill to constitute a Federation, it cannot, moreover, avoid the defects appertaining to federal government as such. Thus, *ex hypothesi*, the admirable flexibility of the English model has to be abandoned. The liberty of the people is bound by a written document, and the federal Houses can never be nerved to action by quite the same sense of responsibility that animates the all-powerful English Parliament.

The simplicity, too, of English procedure is rendered impossible. Even before federation, if we judge by British canons, Australia was vastly over-governed. New South Wales, for example, besides its Legislative Council, had, (and has), a paid Legislative Assembly of 125 members for a population of less than one and a half millions. The six colonies, with a population of three and three-quarter millions, have no less than 660

* It may be studied *in extenso* in QUICK and GARRAN'S *Annotated Constitution*, or Professor HARRISON MOORE'S *Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia*.

legislators in the state parliaments.* Under the Federation these numbers are not reduced,† while some 180 members of the Federal Parliament are added to the governmental machinery; and a new Governor-General is super-imposed upon the already existing six colonial governors. May we not legitimately fear the dangers of over-legislation, which have been the result of the federal system in America, in which country, Mr. Godkin tells us, 15,730 acts and resolutions were passed in one year? "There are," says that writer, "in the United States no less than 447 national legislators, and 6578 state legislators,"—a ratio to population which, if adopted in England, would bring the numbers of the British Parliament up to 4000.

The cumbersomeness of the financial clauses has been already mentioned. The provision of equal state representation in the Senate has also caused considerable criticism in the larger states, and is, so far as it involves disproportionate representation,‡ a grave defect, albeit a defect inherent to an equitable federation under existing conditions.

* 428 in the legislative assemblies, 232 in the councils.

† There is, however, an agitation for the reduction of the numbers of state parliaments. This could be done either by grouping together some of the electorates, or by abolishing the legislative councils. [Reduction has since taken place in Victoria and South Australia.]

‡ A man's vote, *e.g.* in Tasmania, being eight times the value of one in New South Wales.

To such defects Australians are not blind. But they look to advantages by which they will be more than compensated, advantages which, they believe, could not have been obtained except by federation. In the first place, they hope, from the destruction of intercolonial barriers, a great extension of intercolonial trade. Instead of one free local market, the Australian agriculturist and manufacturer will now, at one stroke, have six.

In the second place, federation may be relied on to induce a clearer consciousness of national unity. "For the first time," to use Mr. Barton's words, "in the world's history, there will be a nation for a continent, and a continent for a nation." The native Australian has always, most assuredly, been patriotic: in spite of local interstate bickerings and municipal jealousies, he has always possessed a dim consciousness that he was an Australian first and a colonial afterwards. Had he not possessed this consciousness, all the politicians in Melbourne and Sydney could never have induced him to take the bold and irrevocable leap in the dark which federation involves. But if patriotism existed before, a hardy plant struggling against a hundred obstacles, it will assuredly now be enabled to strike deeper roots and spread wider branches, while its fruits will be shewn in worthier ideals of social and of individual life.

Other aspects of the beneficent results of federation may be presented incidentally in later

chapters of this book. Here it need only be said that few who have given any consideration to colonial politics can doubt the audacious wisdom of the step. The bigoted free-trader will still oppose a stupid and ineffectual resistance, and will make every effort to fan the smouldering embers of state jealousy. But the common sense of the 'New Nation' is against him. United defence, commercial prosperity, a heightened national sentiment, a raised tone in political life, —such reasonably certain advantages may well be worth some sacrifice of state prestige or doubtful economic theory.

CHAPTER VII

ASPECTS OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL LIFE

Class Distinctions

DIFFICULT as must always be the task of endeavouring to set before the people of one country any portion of the conditions of life in another,—to convey a just impression of physical surroundings and the working of political institutions ; to describe in any way adequately a country's social life, avoiding at once offence against persons and offence against truth, is of a difficulty marching on the impossible.

Who is to do it? The passing Froude or Trollope, Michael Davitt or 'Max O'Rell,'—the man of talent and observation spending a few weeks on Australian shores? Or, on the other hand, the writer of matured colonial experience? Both have their difficulties. The former will surely have the more vivid impressions ; but there is the grave danger of radical inaccuracy. The latter will have a firmer grip of actuality ; but his advantages in this respect tend to be counterbalanced by the fact that as his acquaintance with Australia has

grown, his exact memory of England will have receded *pari passu*, and he will find himself insensibly making comparisons not between Australia as it is to-day, and England as it is to-day; but between Australia as it is, or rather as it appears, to him to-day, and his memory of what England seemed to him five or six years ago.* But as any book professing to give an account of Australia for English readers would be vitally defective without some attempt to present a sketch of social conditions, a bare outline is here offered with a full consciousness on the part of the writer of an illimitable task, and strictly limited qualifications.

It is sometimes said that in Australia there are no class distinctions. It would probably be truer to say that in no country in the world are there such strong class distinctions in proportion to the actual amount of difference between the 'classes.' Betwixt the society world of Melbourne or Sydney and the 'masses' is fixed a social gulf that nothing but money can hope to bridge. A small shop-keeper's daughter, however charming, however

* Thus, after living for several years in the colonies the Englishman is apt, when noticing, by chance for the first time, some peculiarity of manner or expression, to dub it at once 'colonial.' Quite possibly, however, it has been an importation from England since his arrival, or the result of a tendency which has been developing on the same lines in both countries. The ideal observer would, no doubt, be one privileged, like Mr. Bryce, to visit and revisit the country he describes, renewing his acquaintance meanwhile with the changing conditions of the country for which he describes it.

'refined,' has no more chance of admission to society, either in a capital or in any country town, than she has in England.

The 'classes' collectively distrust and fear the 'masses' collectively far more than is the case at home. A Toynbee movement would be uphill work in Australia, not because the 'workers' would stand off, but through the apathy or the antipathy of the professional and commercial classes, who, as a whole, fail to realize the importance of Lowe's "educate your masters." *

Individually, it is quite true, relations are for the most part amicable enough between capitalists and workmen; and the lack of deference in the tone of employees, their employers, being unable to resent, have grown to tolerate, and even perhaps in some cases secretly rather to like. A bluff bonhomie hurts no man, they are shrewd enough to see, provided he can get his work decently done at the wages he is prepared to pay. He requires good workmen. The better the workman, the more independent he is likely to be, knowing his own value. In the workshop and the factory,

* A modest experiment in Toynbee work has recently been tried in Sydney, the 'Toynbee Guild' aiming at making in the university a common ground for men of all classes to co-operate in social reform,—a platform where class differences would be dispassionately discussed. But although the society has been loyally supported by individual professors and others, the work has so far failed to interest the university. It is to be hoped that, amalgamated with the University Boys' Club, under the title of "The University and City League," it may meet with more support.

the mine and the shearing-shed, the master wants good work more than he wants deference. He therefore abandons the latter, making a virtue of necessity. But the fact that in Australia 'sir' is seldom heard, that a 'lady' does the washing, and a 'gentleman' is behind the bar, does not in the least mean that class distinctions are non-existent. The 'classes' cannot exact deference from the 'masses;' but neither can the 'masses' exact social recognition from the 'classes.' Even the golden key does not always admit. The able artisan may become a member of parliament, may even hold high political office in the state; but 'society' will not forget his origin or remember his name; his children or his grandchildren may, if they have money, be received, but he himself must be content with Pisgah views of the promised land.*

* "There are no men snobs in the colonies," a colonist of position said recently to the writer, "but—the women!" While attaching all due respect to his opinion, I cannot think it altogether just to attribute the permanence of class distinctions, of which we were talking, entirely to the fairer half of creation. The truth is, as we all know, that the husband may meet on friendly terms in the office, at the club, or the political committee, men whom he would not wish to meet in his drawing-room or marry to his daughters. These men and their families the wife is entrusted with the perhaps not always uncongenial task of keeping at a distance, and is then with Adamite meanness rebuked by her husband for being snobbish. Whether the husband is, or is not, reasonable in not wishing to meet on terms of equality in his own house those whom he has been taught to regard as his social inferiors, is another matter; but there is nothing in colonial urban life to render him likely to be less exclusive in this respect than he is in England.

This is not stated as matter of praise or blame, merely of fact. But it seems to require stating. Otherwise the young man of generous instincts, offended by English social conventions and current hypocrisies, is apt to think he will find in Australia a new land, where—

“Clear honour
Is purchased by the merit of the wearer,”

where the snobberies and meannesses of old-world society perish in the fierce southern sunlight, and where a man, whatever the accident of birth or the lottery of fortune, may find fit work, a fair field for what power is in him, and friends to sweeten his leisure.

In the without-door life of the Australian bush such expectations may prove not altogether unfounded. But in the capital cities he will find a society as exclusive and clique-ridden as any he has left,—exclusive not in the sense of requiring a peculiarly high standard of culture or refinement from its members, but of keeping its doors fast closed against all new-comers not provided with excellent credentials.

Nor is this exclusiveness unreasonable. “This wise world of ours,” says the poet, “is mainly right.” Australian society has suffered enough at the hands of pretenders and ne’er-do-wells of every kind for it to be naturally chary of erecting altars to unknown gods. It is related of a certain Oxford collegiate

body that it was so frequently resorted to by youths who had been sent down from their own colleges, that the authorities, instead of requiring from candidates for admission the customary certificate of character, had to content themselves with the question: "And, sir, what was your offence?" So the Australians have received so many Englishmen suffering from chronic defects of character, pocket, or constitution, that they are apt quietly to ask themselves of each new-comer, 'What was his offence?'—an 'obstinate questioning' surely not, in all the circumstances, unnatural.

Moreover, a moment's consideration should have served to shew our young English dreamer that it was unwise of him to expect social conditions to be other than a shadow of economic. And the economic conditions of the colonies do not materially differ from those of England in the direction of minimizing the difference between extremes of income. There may be no class quite so rich as the richest in England, there is none so poor as the poorest; but the difference between an income of £150 and one of £15,000 makes virtually as deep a gulf as that between an income of £100 and one of £100,000. The large incomes, inheritance apart, fall to the individuals whom the community finds it necessary to remunerate most highly for their services, and in paying them most highly in money she *ipso facto* pays them most highly in social status. The able entrepreneur, the

able lawyer, the able doctor, these are the men whose services she apprizes at the highest rate. These can make the highest incomes; these, unless they have blazing social disqualifications, can, if they care for it, lead society.

If economic conditions should materially change in the future,—the community finding it no longer necessary to make such enormous pecuniary sacrifice to secure efficient service in these directions,—if a time should come when it will be no longer necessary to remunerate the doctor more highly than the mechanic,* or the lawyer than the schoolmaster, then class distinctions may be expected to relax.† Until that time such relaxation is most unlikely. For a reasonable equality of income is an almost indispensable condition of healthy friendships between families. Human nature being what it is, reciprocity is of the essence of ordinary friendship, and reciprocity between families of unequal pecuniary position means difficulty and discomfort on both sides.

* So far as the relatively high incomes of the 'learned professions' depend upon the expense of the necessary training, Mr. Carnegie's recent generosity to the Scottish universities must, of course, if extensively imitated, help the tendency towards the levelling down of incomes, as well as that towards the levelling up of efficiency.

† Although, even under these circumstances, if the best service is to be got out of the ablest men, some manifestation of social approval will be required to replace the distending income as a stimulus to exertion, and this manifestation will infallibly create an aristocracy of its own.

Progress in economic distribution must, then, inevitably precede social progress. And it is surely the height of unreason to expect in Australia, where, as befits a young country, the problems of production have been paramount, such advance towards equitable distribution as would induce any large social changes.

Class distinctions, then, are a fact to be reckoned with in Australian social life,—distinctions, in the absence of any rival criterion of birth or rank, drawn on more purely plutocratic lines than is the case either in England or America.*

The Australian Artisan

The sting of the social exclusiveness of the 'have's' to the 'have not's' is felt, in Australia as elsewhere, far less by the 'workers' than by the poorer of professional men, and by the clerks in banks and public service,—to whose wives and daughters the entrée to Government House dances and rich men's drawing-rooms might mean so much. The Australian working man is put to no

* Possibly there is less distinction than at home between the small shopkeepers and the better paid of the artisan classes. Their incomes range within about the same limits ; their children go to the same schools. This lower middle class, out of range of Government House aspirations, out of reach alike of wealth or poverty, is probably more intelligent, open-minded, and,—the struggle for life being less fierce,—more genial, than the corresponding class or classes in England.

expense in 'keeping up appearances;' his good wages can be freely spent in the sustenance and amusement of himself and his family. Politically, he is, as has been said, all-powerful as soon as he fully recognizes his power; socially, he is excluded only from ranks which he seldom desires to enter; materially, he is among the most fortunate of mankind.

Not only has he a climate in which fires are a luxury, and sleeping in the open may be practised with impunity all the year round; not only are his wages high in proportion to those in older countries; but living is in many respects remarkably cheap. Mr. Coghlan estimates that only 37·5 of the earnings of the people is spent in food and drink. In Great Britain the percentage is 42·2, and in Germany 49·1.

The annual expenditure per inhabitant for Australasia is given by the same competent authority as £36 19s. 5d.* Of this sum £15 15s. 7d. goes in food and drink, £5 2s. 7d. in clothing, and £4 2s. 7d. in rent, leaving a balance of £11 11s. 8d.†

The most startling difference in diet between Australia and old-world countries is the enormous ratio which meat bears to other varieties of food. This is mainly due to its great cheapness, the retail

* *The Seven Colonies*, 1901.

† These figures, being for the whole population of Australia, must, of course, be somewhat reduced to give the working class expenditure.

price of mutton averaging from 2*d.* to 3*d.* a pound, of beef from 3*d.* to 6*d.** While in Great Britain there is annually consumed 109 lbs. of meat per inhabitant, (30 lbs. more than in any other European country), and in America 150 lbs., in Australia the average amount is no less than 264 lbs.,—four times as much as the average in Germany, and ten times as much as that in Italy. Doctors have preached against this meat consumption as excessive, and transitory passions for fruit lunches have been epidemic. Yet, to judge from the statistics of crime, of disease, of intemperance, Australians would seem to suffer nothing from their meat diet, while much of their pluck and energy is commonly attributed to it.

The unreadiness of the artisan classes of Australia to respond to the cry of the reformer is the best of proofs that, taken as a whole, they are

* These prices, taken from the official figures for South Australia, (*Australian Year Book*, 1901, p. 758), will be found roughly true for the whole continent. [The recent raised prices of meat have been due to the drought ; and if it has really broken, will quickly fall to their previous level.] The same may be said of the following table of average wages :—

			£	s.	d.	
Bakers	...	...	2	10	0	a week.
Bricklayers	...	...		10	0	a day.
Bookmakers	...	...	1	16	0	a week.
Carpenters	...	...		9	0	a day.
General servants	...	...	25	0	0	a year (and board).
Miners	...	...		7	0	a day.
Shearers	...	...	1	0	0	per hundred.
Tailors	...	...		10		an hour (piecework).
Unskilled labourers	...	...	6	6		a day.

content with their lot. The deadly earnest, the intensity of enthusiasm, that impels the European agitator to stir his comrades to struggle for the amelioration of their conditions, finds less scope in Australia. Mr. Tillett's eloquence, a year or two ago, was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He did his best to sow among Australian workers the sparks of a 'divine discontent,' assuring them that in many comforts and refinements their homes were inferior to those of the workmen of England. The Australians listened, applauded his rhetoric and laughed at his humour; but continued, and rightly continued, to be reasonably contented with their conditions, and to pity the British workman, struggling amid fog and frost in the overcrowded towns of his little northern island.

Disputes between capital and labour are, unfortunately, not infrequent,* but, the motive being to change, not bad conditions for good, but good for better, that intensity of feeling cannot be

* The apparent success, however, of the New Zealand Compulsory Arbitration Act is rendering its adoption likely in all the states of the Commonwealth. I say "apparent," because opponents of the measure hold that it cannot be properly tested until the advent of a time of trade-depression. Meanwhile, the men's representative in the New Zealand Court,—Mr. Slater,—assures me that he has been authorized by several prominent employers in New Zealand to express their entire approval of the working Act. And, after all, it is on a rising rather than on a falling market that strikes naturally occur. [Since this was written, Mr. B. R. Wise has placed an improved Arbitration Act on the statute book of New South Wales. For details, *vide* W. P. REEVES: *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, vol. ii. pp. 153-162.]

expected which characterized, for instance, the great London dockers' strike.

Next to lack of water and lack of shade, lack of society and lack of amusement are the main drawbacks, (except in the more fertile and more populous coastal districts), to the life of the workers engaged in pastoral and agricultural pursuits. This is far more the case in Australia than at home, distances being so much greater, and settlement so much more sparse.

The young station-hand on a large well-managed station lives a cheery open-air existence, with plenty of riding and sport, the station providing a society of its own.

The unmarried shearer, too, roaming, 'swag' on back, from station to station, chasing summer down the latitudes, leads an active, pleasant life enough. His arduous work, (for it takes a vigorous man to shear his hundred a day), is varied by days or weeks of leisurely tramp along bush-track and road; when he sets out, the scent of the gums in his nostrils, in the cool of early morning, and ceases with sunset glow, to boil his 'billy' of tea by the precious 'creek.' He is known at all the stations. Perhaps he has sheared for them for half a score of years; he knows his shearing-mates: rough but merry is the life he leads with them,—a temporary communism, with one slave,—and master,—the cook. And if, when the shearing is done, he betakes him to the next 'shanty,' and

drinks his whole cheque, (or what proportion of it seems good to the publican),* he harms no one but himself, and, a few days after, is on the road again, lighter of pocket and heavier of head, but otherwise apparently no worse.

But if he decides to marry, select and clear a holding in the 'back-blocks,' and keep a small sheep-run or grow such crops as the land will bear, he will have chosen a lot among the most arduous on the face of the earth,—one which even Odysseus might have hesitated to change for. He will find his life a long and squalid fight against drought and the rabbit-plague, while his children grow up wild creatures, and his wife fades to a haggard drudge; ten or twenty miles, perhaps, from the nearest neighbour, fifty or sixty from a doctor, beyond all reach of any church or school;—nothing to see, nothing to think of, but sun and sheep and gums, gums and sheep and sun.† He who would know

* This process of 'knocking down' a cheque is much less common than in the early days when there were fewer other methods of expenditure.

† The following extract from the *Bulletin* May 11th, 1901) gives a savagely humorous picture of what the settler has to contend against :—

"The sort of station-sale advertisement which would often appear nowadays if stock-and-station advertisements spoke truth—

[PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.]

IMPORTANT SALE OF STATION PROPERTY IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

"The Grindem Mortgage Co., Ltd., has received instructions from BILBY, Esq., to sell by public auction on a day to be named,

what life in the 'back-blocks' is to the poor, may, —after due deduction for artistic exaggeration,—

his celebrated pastoral property, 'Baal-Budgery,' situated in the heart of the back country in the far-famed Western Division. Those desirous of inspecting this property should leave the train at the nearest railway station, which can be ascertained by inspecting the official land-map at Surveyor-General's office. Then, with ordinary luck, they may reach their destination in time. Ample time will be allowed for inspection. The country is of a sandy nature, and therefore capable of absorbing all the moisture that falls. Average rainfall, about five inches. The nearest river is not more than 100 miles distant, and a grand system of irrigation from the river could be attained at a cost not exceeding, say, two million pounds.

"The greater part of the timber consists of a species of eucalyptus, locally known as mallee. It is estimated that there is sufficient of this to supply half the world with eucalyptus oil until GABRIEL sounds his trumpet, after which the market may become disorganized. The strongest grass ever known in any country grows in this mallee, and the supply never fails. It has the wonderful property of keeping green during the longest drought, and is known by the name of porcupine or spinifex. It would probably be very fattening for stock, if they could eat it. Other edible scrubs are 'Emu' and 'Hopbush,' (only these have all been killed by the rabbits), also 'Mulga,' (which the sheep have trimmed nearly six feet up, and now can't reach).

"The agents would point out that there are now hardly any rabbits on the run, (they having mostly died during the last six years' drought). The climate, though warm, is quite pleasant, (compared with the infernal regions), and is wonderfully equable, seldom being higher than 115° in the shade or lower than 90° . One inch of rain is quite sufficient to clothe the whole run in a mantle of green, (if the rabbits would only not breed so quickly and eat it all, also provided that said inch was followed by at least six more of a steady description during the following few weeks).

"There are no less than thirteen large lakes on the run, some being upwards of two miles in circumference, (that have never held water in the memory of the oldest inhabitants).

learn its sordid pathos in the grim sketches of Henry Lawson.

It will not be until the state governments listen to the voice of a minority with justice on their side, and extend more consideration to the

'Sandy Creek' also runs through several of the paddocks, (when there is any water in it). The sheep have been bred-in for many years, and are therefore all of one type, (*i.e.* all that are left). The horses are all matchless steeds, (for thinness, and are somewhat old). The fencing is chiefly post and wire, with wire netting on the boundaries, (mostly buried in sand by the dust-storms). The water supply consists of large excavations now nearly full (of silt); also, two wells with an inexhaustible supply of water, (salt as the sea). The homestead, woolshed, and other outbuildings are all good (enough for such an awful place).

"The owner can give a most satisfactory reason for wishing to sell out, (he is dead broke, and his wife is nearly dead, and he wants to get away from the dog-hole at any price). Full particulars as to the numbers of stock, rent, etc., can be obtained from the agents, 'The Grindem Mortgage Co., Ltd.,' at the offices, the Inequitable Buildings, Boolaroo, or from the manager, 'Poor PHIL GARLICK,' Baal-Budgery, *vid* Hell."

On which the *Bulletin* makes the characteristic comment—

"Bitter satire, is it? Well, half-bitter satire, and half-hard fact. And who's to blame? Partly the greedy or enthusiastic fool who tocks country where there's only one really good season in ten, and *over*-stocks it when he has grass,—breeding sheep to rot when he hasn't. Partly the Government which lives in Sydney and for Sydney, and spends the public money for the aggrandizement of Sydney, while the men on the land, who slave through drought and flood to *earn* the public money, get just as little real help as can't be avoided,—and *no* statesmanlike guidance. Chiefly the fault of the brainless country elector who won't combine with others to end the metropolitan monopoly, but pegs away at the local member for merely local ends. Give us peace in our time, O Lord, or give us war; but whatever you give or refuse, give us brains, O Lord! give us brains! brains! brains!"

country districts, assisting schemes of irrigation, and affording cheaper and better railway accommodation for passengers and freight, that the life-conditions of the average 'out-back' selector can be expected to improve.*

Meanwhile, it is scarcely surprising that the sons and daughters of working-class families prefer to live in the great towns. Urban life may afford fewer chances of ultimate independence. But is it better, after all, to reign in hell than to serve in heaven? The Australians think not. Even the unemployed, (for the unemployed, like the two obols in the play, are ubiquitous),† hesitate to accept fair wages for work in the country.‡

* The long distances in Australia render the fare to the nearest capital, at current mileage rates, quite prohibitive to the poor 'man up-country.' Isolation closes round him and his living death. If Australia were to realize her duty to the primary producers on whom her wealth depends, there would be a prompt revolution in country railway fares, even if it involved a temporary loss to revenue.

† Australia is at present much more interested in determining whether there are more unemployed in Melbourne or Sydney, (the answer to this query being, according to the primitive economics of the daily papers, decisive as to the relative merits of free trade and protection), than in putting in force any scheme for eliminating this cancer of society. A compulsory labour-farm of three grades, (a) for competent out-of-works, (b) for worthy incompetents, (c) for criminal incompetents, has been suggested, but not yet attempted.

‡ It must be remembered that in Australia there is no Poor Law, and consequently no workhouse. The benevolent asylums administer a certain amount of charity, and spasmodic relief-works are started in times of unusual depression. In the country, mutton bread and tea may generally be had for the asking.

In the towns there is assuredly no lack of amusement for the worker and his family. The Sydney artisan has a brighter life than his distant cousin of Manchester or London. A twopenny tram-ride takes him to the ocean beach ; sixpence secures a seat at the theatre. Or, if he be frivolous and young, can he not dance the live-long Saturday or Sunday afternoon at one of the several dancing-halls about the harbour ?* Then there are parks and gardens, picture galleries and

* Such a dancing-place is Clifton Gardens, once of less savoury memory as Chowder Bay. Hither by boat for a few pence, the visitor can be conveyed any Sunday afternoon. A few more pence admit to a spacious modern pavilion. Its appointments are simple, and in better taste than many more ambitious ball-rooms. Entrance is obtained by great sliding-doors, occurring at intervals all round the building. Above, another row of doors, of the same construction, opened from the broad balcony without, serve for windows, and let in the light and wondrous vistas of sunny sea, framed in the brown unpolished wood. On the same level as the windows an inset balcony affords space for half a dozen musicians, who play conscientiously, from two until six, a liberal programme of waltzes, polkas, quadrilles, and other more recondite dances. Below, on the glistening ball-room floor, some hundred and fifty couples manœuvre the measures with Anglo-Saxon decorum. The visitor will be informed that he is in the presence of many less than doubtful characters ; some of the worst larrikins of Sydney, he will be told, share with young artisans and small shop-folk these joys of the muse. He finds this hard to believe, looking on the orderly, well-dressed crowd as it sways to the rhythm of the melody. The master of the ceremonies does the honours with the air of a Beau Brummel, and his peremptory 'ats off' blackens the row of pegs with the hats of the dancers. And outside and around, visible from every door and window of the hall, are the green bays and eucalyptus, and the blue laughter of the sea sparkling through clear fresh air.

museums, and a 'zoo,' free on Sundays,—not to speak of endless picnic grounds in the hundred bays of the harbour.

For further social and intellectual needs he has his trade-union, his free public library, his 'mechanics' school of arts,—where for a small subscription he can read the chief English and American periodicals, play chess, debate the questions of the day, or borrow the latest novel. He has, too, his own labour journals, which are for the most part moderate in tone and ably conducted, with some literary flavour.

Critics find a tendency among Australian workers who think, to be, (as is natural in the absence of systematic instruction),* slaves of one half-assimilated idea in economics or politics. Thus, whatever be the subject under discussion, the 'single-taxer,' the republican, the socialist, the 'private-enterprise' man, the temperance intemperate, will each come with a set speech in favour of his pet doctrine, and will drag it in by hook or by crook, be the connexion never so slight; thus the Domain on a Sunday afternoon is a veritable happy hunting-ground for the one-ideaed. But this is a peculiarity not confined to Australia, nor to working men.

* It is matter of regret that the Australian universities make no adequate provision for the systematic study of economics, nor any whole-hearted attempt to extend their sphere of influence to the working classes,—a short-sighted policy, since on them they must ultimately depend for their existence.

Take him altogether, the Australian artisan, while perhaps inferior to the highest type of worker at home in earnestness and political intelligence, compares favourably with his English relative in pluck, endurance, and versatility. He is also more temperate and more good-humoured; it is rare to hear an angry word among Australians,—‘live and let live’, being almost as much a national motto as ‘advance Australia.’

It is this temper of moderation which, combined with his peculiar political and economic advantages, and with the practical common sense that is the birthright of Anglic* peoples, encourages brave hopes for the future of the Australian workman.

The Woman Worker

The lot of the Australian working woman is overclouded by difficulties inherent to feminine labour throughout the civilized world. The fact that many girls and women, being wholly or partly supported by fathers or husbands, can afford to work for a very small wage, keeps the general rate of pay for woman’s work so low that she who is entirely dependent on it cannot support existence

* The adjective is humbly suggested as supplying a less cumbrous equivalent for ‘English-speaking and of Anglo-Saxon origin.’ ‘British’ is open to grave historical objections; ‘English’ to a charge of ambiguity.

without such privations as starve life of all its sunlight; and make her children, (should she afterwards marry), too often physical derelicts.

Unaccustomed to ideas of social co-operation, the Australian female worker is scarcely better fitted to combine than her sister in England. And a series of articles published in the local *Daily Telegraph* some years since,* exhibited a series of horrors that would have appalled any conscience more highly organized than that of Sydney,—an Australian ‘song of the shirt’ in the bitter prose of facts.

The average price paid to out-of-door sempstresses is $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ for trousers, $6d.$ for waistcoats, and $1s. 4d.$ for coats. At these rates an average rate of pay of $12s. 6d.$ a week can be earned; but from this has to be deducted about $2s.$ a week for thread, and in most cases $1s.$ a week for fares and $2s. 6d.$ rent for the machine. Thus for nine or ten hours’ work a day hundreds of Sydney women have to support life on $7s.$ a week. One firm is definitely mentioned as paying only $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ for working “knickerbockers,

* December, 1895. It is melancholy to record that on the authority of the same journal, (August 17th, 1901), “the condition of the unfortunate sempstress must have retrograded.” This statement is the more significant when we remember the quaint Australian convention by which any low wages or commercial depression in Sydney are set down to the baleful influence of free trade, in Melbourne to the baleful influence of protection. As a strongly partisan free-trade print, the *Telegraph* would not have made the admission referred to, if it had not been too clearly true for its denial to be credited.

size 12, which had to be sewn, lined, fitted with pockets, ten buttons, and a price-card," for this generous wage.

The reformer can only hope that female suffrage,—the complete adoption of which throughout Australia would seem to be only a matter of a few years,—will pave the way to the united action of women in things economic.

Only by the abolition of home piece-work, and the fixing of union rates for every variety of female labour, can any considerable improvement be secured. If a movement in this direction were likely to be sympathized with and helped forward by the still 'dominant middle class,' it might have more immediate chance of success. But the truth is that the middle class, not unnaturally jealous of the advance that the workers have already made, exhaust all their political activity in fighting a losing battle for their own class privileges, and are apathetic towards any social reform from which they themselves are likely to reap no direct benefit.*

* The very name 'labour member' is an anathema to the middle class, and although several ministries have been dependent on them for continuance in office, yet either party, if strong enough, would gladly renounce them. This was shewn in an interesting way in the elections to important offices in the Federal Parliament. It is an open secret that, of two equally suitable candidates for the Presidency of the Senate, the one was elected by the united votes of Ministerialists and Oppositionists, mainly because it became known that the Labour Party intended to vote for the other.

This, though of course in a measure true, would seem to be less true of England, where individual members of the upper classes have generally been found willing to champion the wrongs of those beneath, even at the expense of fame and fortune. In Australia such, if they came forward, would have to face social ostracism, as traitors to their class.*

Help, then, for working-class women must come, if it comes at all, from the working class themselves. And when public instruction has been revolutionized, and has become an education worthy of the name, we may look for a succession of educated men of the working class, who will set themselves, apart from all matter of personal loss or gain, the task of making smooth the rough places of Australian social life.

Early Closing

Meanwhile, it is good to record one step in advance,—a matter in which England may well learn from the Commonwealth. The lot of one

* It will be understood that I am here speaking of the rule, not the exceptions. Individual instances of men and women of the upper middle class who have given themselves to the cause of reform, and whose personal qualities have been such that society has been ashamed to impose the penalty, will occur to any conversant with Australian political and social life. It will be understood, too, that the truth enunciated in the text does not refer to 'charity,' which, usually in the sugared form of balls and concerts, ranks high among fashionable pastimes.

class of Australian woman worker, the shop-girl,* has been enormously improved of recent years by the passing of Early Closing Acts in several of the states, that passed by New South Wales being at once the most important and the most stringent. A small minority of shop employees had long been agitating for a compulsory Early Closing measure. But the conversion of the politicians, as indeed of the general public, was very slow. Many of the shopkeepers objected strongly. Why, they asked, should they, any more than any other class of bread-winners, be forced to stop work at a certain time? And they and their press representatives talked darkly of 'interference' with the 'liberty of the subject,' and the evils of 'socialistic legislation.'

They were answered that government existed for the welfare of the community; that if it were possible by legal enactment to prevent men in other employments,—merchants, doctors, barristers, and so forth,—from so overworking themselves as to cause harm to themselves and to their children, the state would be amply justified in enacting a measure to that end. The men themselves would be the better for it, the welfare of the community advanced. Unfortunately, it is not

* Men employees, as will be seen from what follows, are equally benefited under colonial Early Closing Acts. But the improvement is more notable in the case of women, for they, as well as being more in number, suffered more in degree from the long and late hours. In some of the overcrowded 'cheap' shops, fainting of employees through exhaustion was not infrequent.

possible for the state to regulate hours in most of those callings where the work takes place, or may take place, at home. For it would require an army of spies and inspectors to discover what time each individual worker began his work, what time he took for rest, what time he put up the shutters of his work-a-day brain. But with regard to work done in factories and shops, it is perfectly possible to enact a common rule. The case of shops is even simpler than that of factories; for while foreign competition complicates the question of the hours of work in manufacturing industry, this consideration does not affect the hours in shops. Whether in any country the shops are open ten hours, or twenty, out of the twenty-four, the same aggregate amount of shopping will be done. Is it not, then, a clear waste of the energy and health of the community if shops are forced in self-defence to keep open fourteen or sixteen hours in the day, when a common rule of ten hours would fulfil every need?

Such arguments were reinforced by strong medical testimony from Sydney doctors as to the havoc which long hours in close shops were causing to the constitutions of hundreds of delicate women.

I think it is Mr. Sydney Webb who observes that the public mind is more readily won for state action to prevent physical suffering than for any other purpose. So was it that after some

years of strenuous effort, having to struggle at once against the apathy of indifference on the part of politicians, and the apathy of hopelessness on the part of the bulk of those for whom they were working, the Early Closing Association, armed with this cloud of medical witness, at length succeeded in gaining the sympathy of several clergymen, professors at the university, and other prominent persons.

At the instigation of Professor Scott, then holding the Chair of Greek in the university, the Toynbee Guild, in 1898, held a public conference on the question, and organized a practical inquiry into the actual conditions of shop-assistants' labour. The results were published in pamphlet form * by the Early Closing Association, and widely circulated throughout the colony. The revelation of the existing state of things did something towards forming public opinion; and a strongly representative Deputation, engineered by the Guild, secured from the Minister for Labour (Mr. Hogue) the promise of the immediate introduction of a Bill.

The Bill was duly produced, but met with little favour, being not strictly an Early Closing Bill at all, but one that aimed at securing parallel results by a limit of working hours. Shops might remain open all night, provided that no employee worked more than so many hours. Such a Bill, if passed,

* *Vide* Appendix I.

was bound to be a dead letter ; for no inspectors, however vigilant, could hope to achieve accurate knowledge as to the exact hour that each of the thousands of employees in Sydney shops began, and left off, their work. Evasion must needs be constant, and employees, in nine cases out of ten, would be afraid to complain. The Bill died of criticism, and shop-assistants went back with heavy hearts to their fourteen hours a day of needless weariness.

Victory, however, was at hand. Sir William Lyne, an early convert to the views of the Early Closing Association, when entrusted, upon Mr. Reid's defeat, with the task of forming an administration, bravely made a real Early Closing Bill a plank of his platform, was loyally supported by the Labour Party, and in 1899 duly passed the present Act.

By it, on four days in the week, all shops, (except in certain exempted classes), must close at six o'clock ; one day, (either Wednesday or Saturday), must be a half-holiday, and one day shops may remain open till ten.

The Act has now been in force for more than three years, and has brought happiness, a stranger, into the lives of thousands.

It has also done,—as was foreseen by its framers,—a certain amount of harm to some of the small suburban shopkeepers, who had been dependent for part of their custom on the fact

that they were near and open when the large town shops were far and shut.*

From these may still be expected a certain amount of opposition, and occasional attempts to secure radical modifications of the Act. But in this they are little likely to succeed, being far from unanimous as to what they want, and in number inconsiderable compared to the large majority strongly determined to retain essentially unaltered the Act to which they owe their health, their leisure, their opportunities for recreation and enjoyment,—for all that makes life worthy of men and women.

Such, in brief outline, is the history of a measure whose importance may easily be under-estimated.†

* It certainly seems hard that an old lady and her daughter, who have kept, say, a small draper's shop for years, and by relieving each other have neither of them overworked themselves, should be forced to close at six, and perhaps on that account just fail to make a margin of profit. But that exceptions cannot be made in favour of relatives was made clear to the writer by the case of two small bootmakers in a Sydney suburb. Rivals for years, one employed one employee, the other one son. It would surely be the height of injustice to close one and leave the other open. Moreover, such a provision would lead to shopkeepers extending the connotation of the terms 'son' and 'daughter' with Platonic liberality, but in a spirit far from Plato's. As a price for our having allowed the tyranny of individualism to have rioted so long in this matter, a few hardships must undoubtedly occur; but it cannot be too strongly impressed that the hardship caused is a mere drop in the ocean in comparison with the gain to the vast majority of a long-suffering class.

† It should be added that, in spite of the undoubted inconvenience caused at first to the wives of working men and others by

Climate and Culture

The universities and that indefinable atmosphere of culture that is, or should be, their exhalation, count for comparatively little in Australian social life. They might be centres not only of learning, but of society and social progress. As it is, there is no attempt at an university society, but, with notable exceptions, the professors are content either to tramp at the tail of the procession round the golden calf, or to withdraw from society altogether, and live lotus lives among their lecture-sheets.

So is it that the colonial university,—apart from its direct teaching work, which would seem to be of a high average efficiency,—is a negligible quantity in civic life. A man might live for years in Sydney or in Adelaide without so much as knowing that there was an university.

All that is implied in that much-abused but useful word culture must always have a hard struggle in a new country. The reeking Hotspur's disgust at the smug royal messenger's popinjay gentility may afford some analogue to the temper

this drastic Act, no general complaint was ever raised against it on this account ; and it has been accepted as a righteous and necessary law by the common sense of the community. The observer may find a hopeful augury for the future of New South Wales and of Australia, not more in the inception than in the acceptance of such a measure.

in which the industrial pioneer is apt to regard the advocate of culture in the colonies. "Rough work," he will say, "wants rough hands and rugged hearts; the scent and the soap will do well enough later on."

But whatever value there may have been in such an objection, the days of pioneering are now passing. Already there is a type of young Australian who begins to say: "We have cleared our property. Is it not time to wash our hands and sit down and think what we shall do with it? Else do we not run the risk of misdirected activity? Will not our workmen quarrel, and our rivals out-strip us in the markets, if we are not in the van of economic knowledge? Will not our wives and daughters fail to yield us those high ideals, which are the basis of all true national progress, without this same scent and soap that you wot of,—the aroma of great men's lives that breathes from history, and the cleansing of petty passions in the universal tide of the world's imaginative thought?"

But there is, apart from the storm and stress of pioneering days, a less transitory obstacle, real or imagined. The climate, it is repeatedly asserted, must ever remain a foe to Australian culture, so far as culture is dependent upon reading.

The long, dark English nights, when winter without lies howling, while round the hearth gather father and mother, brother and sister, each with

favourite fire-scorched volumes;—these have no counterpart in Australia. The sweet, mild summer days, when it is joy to lie in the long daisied grass, lazily musing over Milton's 'organ voice,' Wordsworth's vision, Tennyson's 'enchanted reverie,' or smiling at the Laureate's pianola muse; these, too, Australia has not.

Here the long enervating summer day fades rapidly into a delicious evening, in which the languid body craves nothing but rest on the rose-lined verandah, the lightest of novels and most trivial of melodies, broken with desultory chat. The brisk Australian winter day, not frequent enough for the formation of winter habits, not warm enough for restfulness, not often cold enough for a fire, invites a long ride across the bush, with perhaps a dance at an outlying township, and a canter back through the moon-silvered gums.

However it is to be accounted for, there certainly is a lack of respect for learning, of love of books and of art, which is noted by all observers, and deplored by the more ambitious of young Australians. No book-lover can fail to lament the dearth of books, especially of books that are books, in middle-class homes.* There are as many good book-shops in a small New Zealand town like

* Book-shelves, they will tell you at furniture shops, are articles in small request. It is perhaps worth noticing that, while the normal English railway traveller, even on suburban lines, has a book for journey-companion, the Australian, (much to the benefit of his eyes), usually does without.

Christchurch or Dunedin* as there are in Sydney or Melbourne.

When Mr. Francis Adams tells us that in Australia "disinterested study is unknown," he perhaps unconsciously suggests the explanation of the phenomenon.

Even at Oxford or Cambridge, at Edinburgh or Dublin, it may be doubted how large a proportion of the work done can be fairly called disinterested.

It may not always primarily seek direct monetary rewards,—Tennyson's 'Do not marry for money, but go where money is,' being applicable in other than the domestic sphere. But social approval, however manifested, will generally be admitted to be in most cases the prime motive.

Now, the difficulty in Australia is simply that, in its present state of developement, social approval is not secured by culture, but rather social disapproval. How much "disinterested study" would there be at Oxford if there were no fellowships, and if academic success were considered not an aid but a bar to a literary or political career, not a passport but a death-warrant to social favour; if the reward of him who chooses to 'scorn delights and live laborious days' were not fame and modest competence, but ostracism and penury?

* That is, comparatively small; both these towns together containing barely one-eighth of the population of either of the two chief Australian centres.

Their climate may make systematic study difficult; but few who know the Australians can doubt that they would overcome climatic or any other difficulties, if they were once persuaded that the game was worth the candle.* But when they see that it is to the uncultured in their community to whom fall the prizes of life, that culture does not bring with it private virtue or public sincerity, that the men they most respect and the women they most admire are completely devoid of it, they certainly cannot be blamed if they turn their backs on the strange goddess, and find in business, domestic affection, and simple without-door pleasures, sufficient motive to keep them in love with life.

Indeed, "Are they not wise?" may well be asked by many a thinker of the old world, disgusted, like Mr. Bernard Shaw's early heroine, at the affectations and effeminacies of culture, or pseudo-culture, in England. "Is not," such may ask, "book-reading, after all, the poorest of aids to life?" Does it not turn out too often a man who is "not a man but a book?"† Is not the Australian, take him altogether, a better, happier man than the Englishman, just

* In this connexion it is interesting to notice that in the Sydney University school-examinations, excellent places are invariably obtained by scholars of the northern Queensland secondary schools, though these have to contend against the extreme heat of Rockhampton or Townsville.

† Miss WILKINS: *Madelon*.

because his 'native hue of resolution' is not 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought'?

Those among rich Australians who are of another temper of mind, who cannot believe that because wisdom lingers, therefore knowledge should not come,—those among rich Australians to whom art and poetry are more than words, have now a golden opportunity. Never before, probably never again, could they, if they chose, do so much for Australian culture.

If they were but to resist the natural tendency to retire to Europe, and were, instead, to take pride to play the Mæcenæ in Melbourne, if they combined to bestow on success in music, in painting, in literature, a tithe of the honour and glory now showered by most of their class on horse-racing and 'smartness' in dress and manners,—the atmosphere would soon change, (for society imitates upwards), the Mackennals and Melbas and Lawsons would no longer have to leave their country for a livelihood, and Australians, like Americans, would soon develope a sound and stalwart originality in letters and art.

But if the rich fail the nation here, as they have in politics, a slower but still a certain hope may be found in the lower-middle and artisan classes.*

* It is a significant fact that the recent production of the Wagnerian operas for the first time in Australia, was greeted by full houses in the cheapest seats, while (after the freshness of the

Meanwhile, Australia has the compensating qualities of her defect in culture,—if, in present circumstances, a defect it be. Supremely healthy-minded and self-reliant, she is a stranger to all mawkishness, artificiality, and diffidence, eminently adapted to the work that is set immediately before her.

The 'Colonial Fallacy'

In a famous chapter of *Modern Painters* Ruskin has christened as the 'pathetic fallacy' the poet's fancy or convention that when he is gloomy nature is gloomy with him, and that the sunshine in his soul affects the external world.

Perhaps it may be permitted, if on a somewhat remote analogy, to apply the term 'colonial fallacy' to the colonist's fancy or convention that though he lives under Australian skies, he is governed by the climatic conditions and lives among the flora and fauna of his distant motherland,—a 'pathetic fallacy,' too, from a certain standpoint, but one fertile, as will be seen, in evil as well as good.

And first for the good. It is pleasant for home-keeping Englishmen to know that Australians still

novelty had worn off), front stalls and dress-circles were comparatively thin. The same may be noticed at the (very few and far between) performances of Shakespeare in Australia.

think, for instance, of Christmas as a time of snow and frost, of berried holly, of good cheer against the cold; albeit in the Commonwealth the temperature is probably from 80° to 120° in the shade, and ices and cooling drinks are more seasonable than the traditional plum pudding and turkey. Their kin 'down under' will be disposed to applaud the patriotic violence which Australians do to their digestions by thus keeping up old English customs in the face of such climatic difficulties.

Again, that Australians should speak of* and look upon as 'home' that distant England that few of them can hope to see; that they should like to read, week by week, of speeches made in London Parliaments, plays produced at London theatres, pictures hung in the London Academy; that their staple reading should be colonial editions published in London of novels published by London publishers,—varied by the monthly numbers of London magazines;—in all these matters the Englishman will be inclined to rejoice in the interests of imperial unity.

Once more, the similarity of costume and custom, which makes a Londoner who lands for the first time at Sydney feel that, after all, he has never left London,—of this the imperialist will instinctively approve,—as having its influence in maintaining the solidarity of the Anglic world.

* At the cost of some inconvenience caused by the ambiguity.

And if it were in the least probable that the adoption of dress and customs more conformable to new conditions of life would prove in any way hostile to the imperial connexion, few Englishmen and,—at present, at any rate,—very few Australians, would be found to advocate any change in things as they are.

But there can assuredly be no doubt that the tie of common speech, common blood, and loyalty to the crown as symbol of unity, would be strong enough to keep us together, even if what I have ventured to call the 'colonial fallacy' were entirely abandoned, and Australians began to realize in literature and in life that, after all, they live in Australia, and not in England. Englishmen in India are not the less loyal because they have shaken off the weight of English custom, and have struck out a dress and a manner of life of their own.

In nothing, perhaps, is the 'colonial fallacy' more strikingly illustrated than in nomenclature. The fish of Australian waters are remarkable in their dissimilarity to those known to the English at home. Yet so-called 'lobsters,' 'whiting,' etc., are to be bought at every fishmonger's. Similarly with the birds. The 'magpie' and the 'robin' are as delightful as their English namesakes,—to which, however, they have no resemblance but in name. So, too, with the beautiful native wild-flowers.

This matter of nomenclature is one of but minor importance. Rather more serious are the absurdities of dress into which our conservative Anglo-Saxon spirit has betrayed Australians. The black coat and top hat is an unsightly and ridiculous dress enough in England. In an Australian summer it is not only ridiculous, but the height of discomfort. Yet it remains the orthodox 'society' costume.

More serious again is the inappropriateness of the unchanged English hours for work and meal-times. In summer, (which lasts two-thirds of the Australian year), instead of utilizing the cool of the morning for work, and taking a siesta in the fierce heat of noon, the Australians still have, as if they were in England, their eight or nine o'clock breakfast, one o'clock lunch, and six or seven o'clock dinner or tea. An Australian Governor might do a real service to the country, who should set the fashion of early rising and the siesta, duck and cotton instead of cloth, and Australian wines instead of Scotch whisky and English beer.

But the most serious indictment against the 'colonial fallacy' is its paralyzing influence on art and literature. Australians prefer to import foreign rather than to support native talent.

This is especially seen in the matter of magazines. There is in Australia nothing corresponding,—I will not say to the *Nineteenth*

Century, the *Contemporary*, or the *Fortnightly*, but to *Blackwood's*, *Longman's*, or *Macmillan's*,—still less to the *Spectator* or the *Speaker*.

In a word, Australia, with close on four millions of people, cannot boast a single magazine or review.*

And why? Certainly not because there is a lack of available talent. The two or three attempts at an *Australian Magazine* have reached a high degree of merit, and promised, if well supported, to reach a still higher.

But owing largely to the prevalence of the 'colonial fallacy,' they were *not* well supported. Australians preferred to buy imported English magazines,—largely, though not entirely, of the cheap and popular sort, *e.g.* the *Strand*, and the *Windsor*,—than to support the growth of a national review.†

* I have no wish to belittle the excellent work done by the *Australian Review of Reviews*, *United Australia*, and the *Commonwealth Annual*; but the editors of these periodicals would be the first to admit how far their,—or, at any rate, each other's,—publication is from being a representative Australian magazine.

† In 1866, Mr. G. B. Barton, the late brother of the Federal Premier, gave detailed figures shewing that the one town of Sydney imported annually no less than £10,000 worth of periodicals. Australia now imports annually about £500,000 worth of books and periodicals, of which it is estimated that about £150,000 is spent in magazines. Australia is thus content to spend £150,000 a year on English and foreign magazines, without owning a single one of her own.

As to how the £500,000 is made up, Mr. T. A. Coghlan, the

Now, it cannot be healthy for a nation to rely in this way solely on imported art. Art should be the sincere expression of a people's feeling. But the Australian pays to have his feeling done for him at the other end of the world; lives, through his imported art, in a perpetual air of make-believe, and finds in literature an opiate, not a tonic.

Not only does he waste the best hours of the morning in bed,—owing to make-believe that he is enjoying (!) the English climate. Not only does he don the same thick wool or flannel, and eat the same meals as he would in England.* But he is

Government statistician for New South Wales, kindly supplies me with the following table :—

AUSTRALIAN IMPORTS OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS FOR THE
YEAR 1900.

	From United Kingdom.	From America.	From elsewhere.
New South Wales	150,039	10,046	30,779
Victoria	159,056	5,747	27,303
Queensland	26,682*	478*	39,935*
South Australia	36,110	1,054	23,107
West Australia	19,153	45	5,791
Tasmania	10,062†	79†	26,657†

* Includes newspapers.

† Includes stationery.

Of the estimated £150,000 per annum spent in Australia in magazines, Messrs. Melville, Mullen and Slade, basing their opinion on their long experience of Victorian trade, estimate that about one-fourth is expended in the serious magazines.

* With the addition of several extra cups of tea, by way of some libation to the *genius loci*. Tea at rising, tea at breakfast, tea at eleven, tea at lunch, tea at four o'clock, tea at 'tea,' and tea

content to have staring at him from his imported calendar a verse from some poem celebrating the glories of the spring, (with him it, of course, is autumn); after dinner he rests on his imported armchair,—deal stained to imitate oak, (the native woods are beautiful), smokes his imported cigar, (Australia grows excellent tobacco), and reads, in his imported magazine, tales of a life he does not understand, poems of a nature that is not his, while his daughter plays imported music on an imported piano. How can you expect artistic sincerity in such an atmosphere?

Meanwhile the talented Australian artist, author, or composer, starving in his own land, is forced to emigrate. "Australian artists in London" is a frequent cable heading; Australian artists in Australia,—of these we hear less. For in Australia there is nothing for them,—not even the seven shillings a day of the 'unemployed.'

Members of the straitest sect of the free-traders will, of course, if logical, observe, in defence of things as they are, that Australia is not entitled to possess a literature or an art of her own. It is in wool-growing, if we apply the doctrine of Comparative Cost, that the young nation's energies are employed to the greatest economic advantage. As much ability and labour, then, as is diverted again before retiring, is a fair Australian allowance. It seems required by the climate. Some wag has observed that a merciful Providence delayed the discovery of Australia till after that of tea had rendered it habitable.

from this calling (and, according to Mr. Coghlan, there is room in Australia for another 167,000,000 sheep),* so much loss will there be to the national wealth. As for literature and art, if necessary for efficient labour, they could, no doubt, be imported from countries where they can be produced both better and cheaper.

But the straitest sect of the free-traders is not so numerous as it was in liberalism's 'radical days' of *laissez-faire*. One might almost say, varying Sir William Harcourt's famous phrase from the general to the particular, that 'we are all protectionists now'; for, as we have seen, New South Wales, with rare public spirit, abandoned for the sake of federation a free-trade system under which (and, the majority believed, because of which) she was prospering, and purchased nationality at the price of protection. And this is in accordance with the traditions of people who, if a nation of shopkeepers, have, so far, contrived to keep their nation as well as their shops, and have always shewn themselves ready, when occasion called, to jeopardize their shops in order to remain a nation. And, after all, there are many persons unfitted to aid in wool-production, who are yet excellently well fitted for art and literature production; while the art and literature they would produce is essential to the health of the body politic.

* *Seven Colonies*, p. 484.

"How would England," young Australians begin to ask, "care to have all her literature imported from a country at the other end of the world, written by people living in a different climate, under, in many respects, dissimilar conditions? Is not the nation without an art and literature of its own, after all, but a deformed creature, sightless and dumb,—since if 'life without industry is sin,' 'industry without art is brutality'? Should we not be wiser if, instead of banishing, like Plato, our poets from the Commonwealth, we denied ourselves indulgence in quite so much exotic art, and resolved more loyally to support Australian expressions of Australian thought and feeling, Australian transcripts from Australian life?"

The danger of having Australian art and literature 'made in England' is amusingly illustrated by Campbell's well-known lines on *The Departure of Emigrants for New South Wales*. The verse is excellent in sentiment and admirable in intention. Indeed, no less a man than Sir Henry Parkes found inspiration and encouragement in what, he tells us, was his favourite poem. Yet it is to be feared that the average Australian, when he reads the poet's prophecy that :

"Spacious cities with their spires shall gleam
Where now the panther laps the lonely stream,"

will overlook the essential truth of the forecast in its zoological originality. Nor is Campbell's reference

to the Australian youth, "twining his tame young kangaroo with flowers," much less ridiculous,—this not being a form of sport to which the young Australian has ever been addicted.

The truth is, surely, that nations, no more than individuals, are bound to live for economic advantage alone ; and that Australian art and literature, if they are to be created for Australia, can be achieved not by English or Americans, still less by the 'watery friendship' of cosmopolitans, but only by the Australians themselves. So soon as this is realized, the 'colonial fallacy' is doomed to speedy extinction. For the present the fight between national expression and imported insincerity is lamentably one-sided.

CHAPTER VIII

ART, MUSIC, AND THE DRAMA

Art in Australia

THERE was a story once printed in, I think, the *Bulletin*, which may perhaps serve for an introduction to this chapter. The accompanying illustration depicted a starving artist who was in treaty for a cup of "coffee" and a penny pie at an itinerant vendor's. "I suppose I can pay you to-morrow?" he tentatively observes. "Oh, I s'pose so," says he of the barrow,—not however over pleased. So by way of justifying the half-granted credit-extension, "I'm a well-known artist," the hungry one continues, "my pictures are on the line at all the Sydney and Melbourne exhibitions. . . ." "No, yer don't," interrupts the pieman, to the other's equal surprise and regret; "nothink yer gets 'ere wot yer don't pay for. I thort yer was one er them blokes on the sooage works."

By which apologue the *Bulletin* doubtless means to indicate the respect that is paid to art in the Australian metropolis,—how far, in a new country, 'utilitarian' considerations outweigh 'æsthetic.'

Most Australian artists do their best to act, as we have seen in a previous chapter, on the maxim that Australia is a "magnificent country for an artist—to get out of."* It is not that the average Australian is hostile to art. It is simply that he, like his English cousin, is not by nature artistically fertile, and that, unlike him, he has few opportunities of cultivating that poor soil which, as the old historian tells us, so often produces the best results.

The average lower middle-class Englishman has bad pictures on his walls; the average lower middle-class Australian has none.

From an absolute standpoint, the Australian has here the advantage. But inasmuch as in the cultivation of artistic, as of literary, taste, we advance by errors, on 'stepping-stones of our dead selves,' so from the point of view of artistic development the Doré-worshipper of Peckham Rye is nearer the light.

It must not be supposed that there are in Australia no houses hung with satisfying works of art, originals or reproductions: there are many. Only that among the multitude of bare-walled, or all but bare-walled domiciles, they are relatively few.

Even in the seats of the mighty,—and there are some sumptuous mansions in Melbourne and

* The phrase was used in describing the situation to me by one of the ablest of Australian artists.

Sydney,—the pictures are to a large extent either family portraits or studies in every possible and impossible posture of the ubiquitous horse. Landscapes come next in favour; then subject pictures of the 'pretty' order, with preferably a dog or two thrown in. Religious, imaginative, or symbolic art finds no public.

Burne-Jones, Rossetti, Watts, familiar through Hollyer photographs to thousands of English families poorer than Australian artisans, are names here all but unknown. Adelaide has recently secured for the Art Gallery a version of the famous 'Love and Death;' but with the exception of a small version of the same picture and a portrait of Tennyson at Melbourne, the artist is unrepresented in any other art gallery, and practically unrepresented by etching, print, or photograph, throughout the homes of Australia.

Burne-Jones and Rossetti are in no better plight. The Pre-Raphaelite brethren have, for Australia, lived in vain.

Ruskin is sometimes administered, in cheap editions of his shorter works, as a feminine school-prize. William Morris, and the revolution in the domestic interior for which his name stands, has left Australia almost untouched. Sham-graining and varnish riot in Sydney and Melbourne as nowhere else in the world.

"The people with money," said a partner in a large firm of Australian furniture makers and

importers, "have no taste, and the people with taste have no money."*

But Australia is young;—as a nation, indeed, barely two years old. Past and present, then, are in interest dwarfed by the future. What is the outlook?

The optimist will find a variety of evidence on which to base his hopes of better things.

In the first place, the colonial governments have always been generous in their support of pictorial art. New South Wales alone votes some £2000 a year to the purchase of pictures, largely from London exhibitions, and for the maintenance of the Sydney art societies.† Something, too, may be hoped from the Federal Government.‡

The art galleries in all the states are well attended, the Sydney gallery on Sunday afternoons being often uncomfortably full.§ The attendance

* This, of course, is said in London too. But there it is a half truth. Here the veracity fraction would be more like ninety-nine hundredths.

† This in addition to £1000 for salaries of officials at the gallery. Part of the sums voted, both in Sydney and in Melbourne, is profitably employed in the support of travelling scholarships.

‡ Thus a commission has been already given Mr. Tom Roberts to paint a portrait-picture of the opening of the Federal Parliament by the Duke of York. This might well be made a starting-point for an Australian 'National Portrait Gallery.'

§ In eighteen years over four million persons have visited the Sydney Art Gallery. During the month just past, (July, 1901), 19,277 people visited the gallery,—an average of 439 on each weekday and 1855 on each Sunday.

is not only large, but interested. People come not for shelter, nor, as at certain London shows, for dress and chat, but simply to see the pictures. Good pictures cannot ultimately fail to secure improvement in popular taste. And, amid a natural amount of mediocrity, or worse, there are some excellent pictures in the different galleries,—pictures which, by an admirable inter-state loan-system, dwellers in all the large centres are enabled to see.

Adelaide has chosen its pictures with conspicuously good taste, and should with time excel the other capitals. Sydney has Ford Madox Brown's 'Chaucer,' Leighton's 'Wedded,' and examples of Millais, Fred Walker, Alfred East, and many of the more prominent English painters. In water-colours she is especially rich. A few copies of Italian masters, a cast of the Ghiberti gates, and a reproduction of the Bayeux tapestry, do something to mitigate the inevitable air of modernity. Melbourne has much fine modern work: Waterhouse's 'Ulysses and the Sirens,' Swan's 'African Panthers,' a cottage interior by Edouard Frère, chosen by Mr. Ruskin, an original Turner, Elizabeth Thompson's 'Quatre Bras,' Walker's 'Right of Way,' and J. W. North's 'Dead Rabbit,'—a charming and delicate piece of work, of which, however, the pathos altogether evaporates in Australia, where the death of a million rabbits would not produce a tear. The Melbourne gallery is indebted to Professor

Herkomer for his acquisition, on behalf of the colony, of many valuable works, including some etchings by Max Klinger, and characteristic examples of Whistler.

The old Victorian mining centres, Ballarat and Bendigo, have their art galleries. Western Australia has already a fine collection, comprising examples of Wilkie, Leighton, and Millais.*

On the walls of all these galleries, notably at Sydney, pictures by Australian artists are now beginning to take a well-merited place. Considering the small encouragement given by the wealthy, and the dearth of local magazines to provide the black and white work that is bread and cheese to so many English artists, the general level of achievement of Australians is extremely high. Among them may be mentioned Julian Ashton, Lister Lister, Longstaff, Lambert, Gordon Coutts, Spence, and Long,—not to speak of the inimitable Phil May and Bertram Mackennal the sculptor, who are, of course, no longer in Australia. A dozen more names might be mentioned of men who, in spite of scant appreciation and almost invisible pecuniary rewards, persevere in excellent work, mainly in landscape and in portraiture;—no outstanding genius, perhaps, among them, no

* To the collection has recently been added Alfred Parsons' 'The Green Punt,' from the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1900.

towering imagination,—but men who are masters of their craft, well qualified to interpret the strange Australian nature that lies about them, and lend eyes to the unseeing multitude,—which is, I take it, a main function of artists, the world over.

Hope, then, for colonial art may be found in the recognition by the state of its duty to support public galleries, in the intelligent crowds that visit them, in the good collections of pictures that are hung in them, and in the promising work of Australian artists. But perhaps most hope of all, in the acceptance, albeit tardy, of kindergarten principles in the schools. For it is in their earliest years that men and women are most susceptible to colour and form. Children have hitherto in Australia been brought up for the most part among influences of abnormal ugliness,—most Australian schools being considerably more repellent in appearance than Australian gaols. Thus they have come insensibly to associate all that is wise and good with all that is ugly.

Now, under happier auspices, a leaven, at any rate, of Australian children is becoming accustomed to comely schoolrooms, fresh flowers on the desk, good pictures on the wall.

It cannot be very long before these various influences for good will begin to affect Australian homes; and the next century may find

the Commonwealth as far ahead of England in artistic cultivation as she is now behind her.

Music in Australia

Even more hopeful, perhaps, is the outlook in music,—of all forms of artistic culture probably the least dependent on antecedent conditions, the most universal in its appeal.

No great composer, it is true, has yet been reared on Australian shores. But the creative age of music for English peoples is not yet come; they are still in the receptive period of their growth.

In the rendition, however, as in the appreciation, of good music, Australians have already won a name for themselves. Not a London season passes without antipodean claimants for musical fame making their bow at the great nerve-centre of the English world. And if all cannot expect the success of Madame Melba or Miss Ada Crossley, or their latest rival, Miss Amy Castles, yet on the other hand there is no reason to suppose that these will remain isolated instances of Australian achievement.

Indeed, for the production of fine voices, the warm, dry Australian climate,—with its freedom from mist or fog, and the health-breathing influences of its eucalyptus forests,—is already proving itself peculiarly suitable. Visiting singers always find

matter for enthusiasm in the clear, true voices of an Australian chorus. Church choirs, I admit, unless in some of the nonconformist churches, are markedly inferior to even second-rate choirs in England; and the singing at both the Anglican and the Roman Catholic cathedral in Sydney is below the standard of many an English parish church or old-world Normandy minster. But this is a reproach rather to Australian religion than Australian music. The psalm-singing of the chorus of Christians in the Sydney production of that pious impiety the *Sign of the Cross* shewed that the voices and even the sentiment for devotional music was not wanting in Australia, though the churches have so far failed to enlist them in their service.

It is not only in vocal music that Australians are learning to do good work. The results yielded to the magic wand of Signor Hazon in Sydney, or the eccentric ex-Professor* Marshall Hall in Melbourne, shew that local amateur orchestral societies, under good management, can produce excellent music excellently well. Such orchestral concerts are well patronized,† not, of course, entirely

* Mr. Marshall Hall was recently superseded in the Ormond Professorship on account of his publication of a series of erotic rhymes under the title of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," which caused much scandal in Melbourne. He, however, retains control of the conservatorium.

† At a Saturday afternoon concert lately given by Mr. Marshall Hall in the Town Hall at Melbourne, (the prices being 1s., 2s., and

by those who love good music; but largely, especially in the dearer and more prominent seats, by those who attend because it is 'the thing' to attend classical concerts, while they inwardly mutter with Cristoforo Sly, in the midst of Chopin nocturne or Beethoven sonata, "*excellent, i' faith; but would 'twere done!*"

Far be it from musical amateurs to scoff at such; rather should we be profoundly grateful that in Australia, as elsewhere, it is 'the thing' to patronize good music. It is at least a step in the progress of popular taste. And every step must be utilized; for the way is long. To the great bulk of the Australian, as of the English, or the American, people, good music still remains caviare. Comparatively few people enjoy a serious, as they do a comic, opera, or a comic opera as they do that outrageous mixture of vulgar mirthlessness and musicless vulgarity which, on *lucus a non lucendo* principles, is known as a 'musical comedy.'

If we turn to 'music' of the home, the Australian drawing-room song is as tawdry as the English variety,—which, of course, as a matter of fact, it usually is. There are about six; and their constant iteration in every key and every voice,

3s.), the writer did not notice an empty seat in any part of the house. The programme consisted of Brahms's "Tragic Overture," Mozart's "Qui Sdegno," Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major, and Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll."

(with or without violin obligato), is,—well, we know Shakespeare's adjective for 'iteration'

But the tide is on the turn. Probably Australians will look back to the year 1901 as as important in the musical as in the political history of their country. For the first time for many years a competent opera company visited the Australian capitals, and gave Australians an opportunity of familiarizing themselves with the more 'popular' of the Wagnerian operas, Madame Ella Russell creating Senta for Melbournians, and playing Elsa and Elisabeth with fine effect. So successful was this venture that an enterprising Australian firm sent Signor Hazon, the Sydney conductor, to Italy in order to engage Italian singers for a second opera season. By these means, with the aid of an excellent orchestra of forty performers, Melbourne and Sydney have enjoyed not only such old favourites as *Aïda* or *Un Ballo*, but comparative novelties like *Cavalleria*, *Otello*, *Fédora*, and *La Bohème*.

A study of the audiences at these performances, (and the writer went frequently to all parts of the house), was full of interest. And it was encouraging to one who believes in the Australian people to notice that the cheaper parts of the theatre were both the best filled and the most appreciative.*

* This is not to be accounted for by the supposition that many who could afford the dearer seats prefer the cheaper, on Mr. Gilpin's principles. This practice is much rarer in Sydney than in

Not, of course, that approval, especially of the German operas, was unanimous. "I don't care much for this 'ere Waggoner," my gallery neighbour on one occasion confided to me between the acts at *Tannhäuser*, "it's very much like *Lonny-grin*; but," he added in consolatory tones, "there's a nice march coming." And the trying scene at the first meeting of the Dutchman and Senta was almost wrecked by a genial Sydney ruffian, who called to the ghostly wooer, hesitating to put to the test his one chance of averting his awful doom, and encouraged him in loud and reassuring tones to "buck up, mate!"

Nevertheless, with all due deduction for the effects of fashion and novelty, the fact that during 1901 two capable opera companies attracted generally good, sometimes crowded, and always enthusiastic, audiences for four seasons * of several consecutive weeks in both Melbourne and Sydney, is an encouraging omen for Australian music.† For music, of all things, the 'appetite grows by what it feeds on,' and he that has once learned

London, partly owing to the comparative cheapness in Australia of even the dearer seats. (The prices at the 1901 season of Italian Opera were : dress circle and stalls, 6s. ; unreserved stalls, 3s. ; upper circle, 2s. ; gallery, 1s.)

* For each company played a return season.

† The enthusiasm of Sydney audiences for *La Bohème* was most marked. Repeated performances found the house full in all parts, and were greeted with applause such as is seldom heard in an Australian theatre.

to enjoy a Wagnerian opera is not likely again to find pleasure in the weary trivialities of the *Bohemian Girl*, nor rest content with the beauties of *Tannhäuser*, while the *Meistersingers*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and the rest of that glorious company, remain untasted.

But the main hope for the future of Australian music, as of art, lies with the young. Abolish nineteen-twentieths of all "music" lessons at present administered in the country, and substitute a well-directed 'music spell' of twenty minutes, in the heart of the day's work at the state schools,—a spell in which music, melodious but good, simple but not trivial, should be intelligently played them,—and we shall find more improvement in a nation's taste than could be wrought by all the musical professors in the world. The normal man prefers banal and silly music simply because from his childhood up he has learnt nothing else. Familiarize children with good music, as well as (at present their sole pabulum) the least refined of music-hall songs, and they will not prefer the latter with that wonderful unanimity that at present hinders musical advance. The key for national progress in music, as in all else, lies in the nation's schools. And there are signs in Australia of a wise and efficient discontent with the mechanical school system at present in vogue, and of a growing determination to substitute the methods of Pestalozzi and

Common Sense for those of Tape and Drill (late Squeers).

With children thus predisposed to musical culture, with the excellent provision for technical instruction already made at the Melbourne conservatorium and elsewhere, with the increasing opportunities for the hearing of good music at concerts, organ recitals,* and opera seasons, and with the health and sunshine of the Australian climate, what results may not be hoped from the New Nation in the new century?

The Drama in Australia

At a time when, as Mr. Bernard Shaw says, "modern civilization is rapidly multiplying the class to which the theatre is both church and school,"† no excuse is needed for the critic of

* Both Melbourne and Sydney have fine town-hall organs, support a public organist, and give free or semi-free recitals. In all cases the temptation to 'play down' to the audience has not been resisted; and the *pièce de résistance* in Sydney, until lately, was a "Storm Cantata," in which real thunder and real lightning were monkeyed for the delectation of those present; and a deal of dexterous juggling reproduced the rain-drops, till an excited audience groped involuntarily for umbrellas. On the other hand, where good music has been consistently played, audiences, 'fit though few,' have grown into audiences not less fit, and more numerically satisfactory. In the encouragement of bands to play good music in public parks, Melbourne and Sydney have much to learn from the London County Council.

† *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*, preface to vol. ii.

Australian life to make some reference to the condition of the drama in Australia. Of the strolling companies that visit the country townships, I do not propose to speak; for they differ little in character or capacity from the companies that one hears at a little English town like Aldborough playing *Lady Audley's Secret* or *Little Nell* to 'houses' of fifty or sixty pairs of ears. The Australian country audience is quite as unsophisticated as the English one; and provided there is a comic man with a genial presence and a stage Irish accent, and a startling mechanical 'effect' of some kind, a reasonable amount of success is assured.* Yet it is to be feared that the lot of the Australian strolling player is an even less happy one than that sketched by Mr. Merrick, and others, of English Thespians of a similar class. Distances are long, fares are high, and many townships too small and straggling to repay a visit.†

* The 'effect' in a highly successful drama, which the writer saw performed at the "School of Arts," at Bowral, New South Wales, was the blowing up of the heroine (in white muslin) by an infernal machine. The lady was tied up; the fuse was lighted in full sight of the audience, a few feet from the lady's nose. Needless to say, the hero arrived in time, cut away the heroine, and had no sooner withdrawn with her than, to the huge delight of the audience, with the force of at least four squibs, the infernal machine exploded!

† Life in such small townships is, as has been said in a previous chapter, of inconceivable dulness. I am reminded of a story told in an Australian journal to illustrate this fact. "Any theatre?" a visitor to such a place is said to have asked. "No." "Any

With this brief reference, I may be allowed to pass to considerations of the drama in Melbourne and Sydney, just as the student of the English drama would be justified in confining his main attention to the theatres of London, from which all travelling bodies derive their matter, their manner, and their motive force.

Moderate prices and short runs are the two great facts to be remembered in comparing Australian with English theatrical enterprise. The lowest-priced seats in the chief Sydney and Melbourne theatres are not cheaper than those at corresponding London houses. One shilling admits to the gallery, while the upper circle,—called in Australia the “family circle,”—at two shillings, takes the place of the English ‘pit.’ The best seats, however, are, in comparison with London charges, very moderately priced, those in the dress circle (the most ‘fashionable’ part of the house) costing, as a rule, but five shillings, front reserved stalls four shillings, and unreserved stalls three shillings.

As to runs, three or four weeks is a long career for a play in Sydney or Melbourne. *Florodora* ran for two or three months; but that was an Australian record. A serious drama like *The Second in*

concert hall?” “No.” “Well, what amusement is there?” “Oh, there’s the public-house, o’ course, an’ the Salvation Army; and at 5.30 the express passes through, and most of us go down to the station and *watch her shunt.*”

Command or *Mrs. Dane's Defence* could hardly expect more than a season of three or four weeks.

It might perhaps be supposed that, in these circumstances, elaborate scenery and costumes would not be expected. On the contrary, there is nothing about which an Australian audience is more particular. Poor acting and elocution may be forgiven; poor dressing, never.

The most popular forms of theatrical amusement in Sydney and Melbourne are (1) the melodrama, (2) the variety show, (3) the comic opera.*

The causes for the superior attractiveness of the melodrama and the music-hall are the same in Sydney and in Melbourne as in London. They

* That this is the case is to some extent borne out by the following summary of the attractions at the chief Sydney and Melbourne theatres at the time of writing (August 17th, 1901). At Sydney, two of the largest and best theatres, the Lyceum and the Criterion, (we see the 'colonial fallacy' strongly in theatre nomenclature), are playing the *Mariners of England* and *Death or Glory Boys* respectively. At Melbourne the *White Heather* and the *Sign of the Cross* fill the Theatre Royal and Her Majesty's. Three small theatres in Sydney and one large one in Melbourne are running variety entertainments. This leaves one theatre in Melbourne (the Princess) playing farce, (*Why Smith Left Home*); and two theatres in Sydney, one (Her Majesty's) playing Italian opera, and one (the Theatre Royal) playing *Mrs. Dane's Defence*. Comic opera is at present, it so happens, unrepresented in either centre, but long seasons have just concluded with enormously successful runs of *Florodora* and the *Casino Girl*.

Of the companies engaged, (who virtually all play seasons in both Sydney and Melbourne, possibly also in Adelaide, Brisbane, and Perth), two are English or foreign, the rest are, to a greater or less extent, Australian in management and personnel.

cater for an uncultured public, and the uncultured public is, as yet, the vast majority.

As in England, the melodrama is frankly bourgeois in its clientèle: the 'nicest people' in Sydney do not affect this form of entertainment, —unless, of course, as under Mr. Wilson Barrett's ægis, it assumes a fallacious aspect of 'the legitimate,' and is handsomely staged withal. But the artisan, clerical, and shopkeeper classes love their melodrama with almost transpontine enthusiasm.

The Sydney or Melbourne variety entertainment is much the same as that provided at the London music-halls, without elaborate ballets, or indeed ballets of any kind. It is, perhaps, on the whole, rather cleaner. English or American 'stars' like Miss Lottie Collins, or Miss Peggy Pryde, are imported from time to time; the remainder of the turns being filled by lesser imported luminaries, and by Australian singers and dancers, trick-cyclists, or contortionists. The clientèle of the variety shows is less bourgeois than that of the melodramas. By ladies 'in society,' indeed, the dress circle is comparatively little visited; but their husbands and brothers, and, in due course, sons, are regular attendants, and find their tastes surprisingly identical with those of 'larrikins' in the gallery. Although Sydney has at present three variety shows in full swing, there is seldom an empty seat in any one of them.

Yet the real foe in Australia to the serious

drama, or modern comedy of manners, is not the melodrama or the variety entertainment; for these cater, upon the whole, for rather different classes. It is the 'comic opera,'* or American 'musical comedy,' that, by weaning the taste of 'society' from anything that demands thought or refinement, have contributed to make Australia a poor field for the actor of 'legitimate' drama.

The fortunes of the Brough-Boucicault company illustrate this fact. It is the organization to which Australians have for many years been indebted for the production of virtually all the modern dramas that have reached the antipodes;† and by which they have been acted with a taste and an intelligence that would have won recognition anywhere,‡ and as perfect a *mise en scène* as if they had been destined for runs of months instead of days.

Nevertheless, as is no secret, the financial success achieved by the company has been in no

* Except the charming series of Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. These have for some reason or other invariably fallen flat in Australia, and are now seldom or never heard.

† Among their productions may be mentioned *Sweet Lavender*, *Dandy Dick*, *The Amazons*, *Sowing the Wind*, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith*, *The Benefit of the Doubt*, *The Gay Lord Quex*, *The Bauble Shop*, *The Physician*, *The Adventures of Ursula*, *The Second in Command*, and *Mrs. Dane's Defence*,—most of them within a few months of their original production in London.

‡ Among members of this famous Australian company who have since found favour in London are Mr. Dion Boucicault, Mr. G. S. Titheradge, and Miss Hilda Spong.

way comparable to their artistic attainment;* and it is only by repeated travelling, sometimes as far afield as Hong-kong or Calcutta, that it has been possible to keep the organization together. It says much for the devotion of Mr. and Mrs. Brough to their art that, in spite of repeated discouragement, they have continued for so many years to play the best procurable plays with the best procurable talent. And any improvement in dramatic taste which may occur in Australia will be in no small measure due to them.

A word should, perhaps, be added with regard to Shakespeare in the colonies. It is a matter of reproach in England that if an Englishman wishes to hear anything of Shakespeare's, except two or three of the more familiar plays, he has to put himself to the trouble and expense of a visit to

* The following extract from the *Sydney Sunday Times* (August 18th, 1901) is quoted as shewing the difficulties that an Australian manager has to contend with:—"H. A. Jones' remarkably clever play was finally produced last night after less than a fortnight's run. The taste of the public might certainly be improved,—very much improved, in fact. But the manager who attempts it generally finds, after paying perhaps close on £1000 for the acting rights of the piece, and another £1000 for the staging, that his banking account has dwindled very considerably." The paper goes on to suggest two or three alterations that might have "improved" the play from the point of view of a Sydney audience. The lady suicide should have performed her despatch *coram populo*, preferably with a saw. Mrs. Dane should have "indulged in a hair-pulling contest with Lady Eastney." A few other such "improvements," says the *Times*, "and *Mrs. Dane's Defence* would in all probability have packed the Royal for many weeks.

Germany. In Australia things are even worse. The majority of playgoers are as innocent of Shakespeare as they are of Ibsen, of Maeterlinck, or of Brieux.

Here, too, the blame must lie rather with the public than with the actors. Competent players like Mr. Rignold and Mr. Alfred Dampier have from time to time ventured an experiment in Shakespearean productions, but almost always with results financially depressing.*

That at such productions it is the cheaper parts of the house that are best filled is a fact which gives the optimist his hope for the Australian stage. If there is growing up,—and there is,—an increasing number of men, sons of the artisan class, ready to attend, and capable in some sort of appreciating, performances of

* The writer was present at one of the latter actor's 'Shakespeare Fridays' at Melbourne.

The performance (that of *Macbeth*), apart from excellent work done by Mr. and Miss Dampier, was not, of course, of absolutely first-rate merit, and the scenery, though not inadequate, was not sumptuous. Still, the production was quite good enough to be enjoyed by any one who loved his Shakespeare, and who remembered that "The best in this sort are but shadows, and the worst no worse, if imagination mend them."

How were the actors rewarded for their enterprise? The gallery was well filled, and demonstrative in its approval. The rest of the house was almost entirely empty. This was not an exceptional experience. Whenever I have attended a performance of Shakespeare in Australia, I have invariably noticed the galleries well filled and enthusiastic, the dress circle and the stalls either empty or yawning.

Shakespeare and other of the classics, there is no reason to despair of the future. Just as for the future of politics, so for that of dramatic art, the ground of hope seems to be not in the 'educated' classes, at present still the predominant influence, but on the upward education of 'new men' from the social strata beneath.

For the 'root of the matter' is assuredly in the Australian, and especially in the Sydney, playgoer. He discharges to admiration at least one of the functions of the playgoer;—he playgoes. Probably nowhere in the world, in proportion to population, are there more, or more largely attended, theatres. Men, women, and children are all habitual playgoers,—playgoers with the temperature at 55°, playgoers with the temperature at 105°, when the 'gods' take off their coats and revel in almost Olympian simplicity of raiment.

Moreover, the Australian is not only an habitual playgoer, but an intelligent and, up to his lights, a discriminating playgoer, who knows what he wants, and is generous in his approval when he gets it.

It is that 'what he wants' that wants improving. And it is rather strange that in Australia, where government activity has so often replaced private lack of enterprise, the state theatre, which has done such admirable work in Germany and elsewhere, has never been attempted. Mr. William Archer has conclusively shewn * the

* *E.g.* in the *Monthly Review*, June, 1902.

peculiar circumstances that render state or municipal patronage of the theatre a necessity, if any reasonable standard of good taste is to be maintained. His arguments will not lose in cogency by application to the conditions of Australian life.

CHAPTER IX

AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

It is a fresh October evening in the heart of the Australian spring.*

I have just returned from a visit to the grave of the first Australian poet, Henry Kendall,—the first and the greatest.

He sleeps, as he wished, within sound and sight of the sea. For Sydney, like little Dunedin, wears its graveyard frankly on its brows, the small white city of the silent dead guarding the entrance to the great and vari-coloured city of the noisy living.

The tall white column that friends have set over him in Waverley cemetery looks eastward from its eminence across the blue Pacific.

A poet could hardly ask a fairer sleeping-place. No flowers, indeed, are about it. No trees give shade. But around it the still forest of marble tombs rises clear against the sea, half redeemed, when I saw them, from their ashen pallor by the radiance of an Australian sunset glow,—a glow

* October 19th, 1901.

that mellowed the hues of the grand sweep of ocean and "stedfast crags of Coogee" on which the tomb looks down;—the calm sea-blue fading towards the horizon into purple haze, the purple into orange, the orange into the faintest of saffrons, and that, through green, into the cloudless sapphire of Australian skies.

But an Australian sunset all too soon forgets its loveliness. A few minutes of almost unearthly beauty, and the glow that turned a graveyard into a paradise had utterly passed,—passed as utterly as the touch of inspiration that kindles for a moment a poet's life into beauty, and then leaves him a heap of common ashes in a common sepulchre.

Henry Kendall, Poet,—for so the proud inscription on the tomb proclaims him to the Pacific,—was born in 1841, at Ulladulla, near Shoalhaven, New South Wales.

His grandfather, a Lincolnshire schoolmaster, had been one of the missionaries whom Marsden took out in 1809 to convert the Maoris. Retiring to New South Wales, he had been given land at Ulladulla by Governor Darling. The poet's father, who was in very poor circumstances, gave the child what education he could, especially loving to tell him the old Greek stories. These, and the lovely coastland scenes about his squalid cottage home, were Kendall's earliest impressions.

When he was eleven his education ceased with the death of his father. What became of the young

poet for the next few years is not known. The Nature that he had already learned to love took charge of her votary. It was to these lonely days that Kendall looked back with affection when he wrote the lines on the Orara by which, through the *Golden Treasury* and other anthologies, he is chiefly known to home-keeping Englishmen.*

At fourteen he was taken by an uncle on a cruise in his whaler brig; and the shrinking, sensitive lad, to the music of sailors' curses, saw something of the Marquesas, of Yokohama, and of that tropic island that now holds the ashes of a poet-soul greater than his and not less solitary.

On his return to Australia, Kendall had the good fortune to obtain employment as clerk with Mr. J. L. Michael, a solicitor practising in the country township of Grafton. Kendall found in his employer a man of unusual culture and generosity,

* "The air is full of mellow sounds,
The wet hill-heads are bright,
And down the fall of fragrant grounds
The deep ways flame with light.

"A rose-red space of stream I see
Past banks of tender fern;
A radiant brook, unknown to me,
Beyond its upper turn.

"The singing silver life I hear
Whose home is in the green
Far-folded woods and fountains clear
Where I have never been. . . ."

who had numbered among his friends Ruskin, Millais, and other exponents of the new artistic movement in England. Michael himself had published more than one volume of verse,* and seems at once to have recognized the promise of his employee, and placed an ample library at his disposal.†

Kendall was a true-born Australian, and though he read English poets whom he found most akin in spirit, he devoured with especial avidity all that had been written by previous Australian singers.

Of such, if we take 'Australian' in the widest sense, there were already a goodly number. There was Mr. Barron Field, whose lamentable *First Fruits of Australian Poetry* (1825) is remembered by his friend Charles Lamb's bantering review. There was the Rev. John Dunmore Lang,—at once

* His verse was neither strong nor original, yet a true love of nature is shewn in "My Grave" and in many lines that might be quoted from *Songs without Music* (Sydney, 1857), and *John Cumberland*. It is with evident sincerity that he exclaims—

"Oh, how in the deep longings of my youth
I loved thy solitudes of forest glades!"

† It is interesting to find in Michael a connecting link between the young Australian poet and the Pre-Raphaelite brethren, with whom, had he lived in England, he might well have thrown in his lot. It is significant that in one of his poems the typical names in literature are given as Homer, Euripides, Dante, Shelley, Ruskin, and Rossetti.

Scotchman, wit, theologian, ethnologist, versifier, historian, hymn-writer, and politician.* There was W. C. Wentworth, prominent among early Australian statesmen, who, in his attempt for the Chancellor's Medal at Cambridge (1823), had prophesied an "Austral Milton," an "Austral Shakespeare," and an "Austral Pindar." There was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Henry Parkes, who in 1842 had published his first volume of verses called *Stolen Moments*.† And, more important than these, from our present point of view, there was Mr. C. H. Harpur (named by injudicious zeal the "Australian Wordsworth"), who in 1853 had

* This colonial Crichton lived from 1779 to 1878. We have seen something of his political views in an earlier chapter (*vide* p. 95). In the interests of New South Wales, (he was Presbyterian minister in Sydney), he made fourteen voyages across the Atlantic, and composed a fresh volume every voyage. His *View of the Origin and Migrations of the Polynesian Race* shews research and ingenuity. His *Aurora Australis* appeared in 1826. His verses to the *Heads of Port Jackson* prove that he was not without a touch of true poetry in his rugged egotistic temperament. D. H. Deniehy is another pioneer in Australian literature whose name commands respect.

† "Stolen," he tells us, "from the ordinary duties of a not over-happy life." Readers of Parkes' autobiography will remember the charming letter in which Mrs. Carlyle, to whom the Australian politician had presented a copy of his book when on a visit to England, acknowledged the *δῶρον ἡδωρον*. "Is it a compliment," she asks, "to my *judgment* or my *mercy*, your sending the little book of poems to *me* rather than to my husband '*on second thoughts*'? Anyhow, I am decided to take it as a compliment to *something* which you think *I* have *more* of, not less of, than my husband has! And so I thank you heartily."

published his *The Bushrangers and other Poems*, striking in the *Creek of the Four Graves*, and elsewhere, a note truly Australian, if without much musical quality.*

Under such influence was it that the genius of Henry Kendall ripened to maturity.

Michael, before he died (found shot, none knew how, in the stream of the Clarence), had been the means of introducing the poet to several useful Sydney friends,† one of whom now obtained for him a vacancy in the Lands Office.

Although the publication of his first volume of poetry in 1862 won him some fame in Australia among those who cared for such things,‡ Kendall recognized that the English hall-mark was advisable if not necessary to colonial

* Kendall wrote of him with enthusiasm and affection, as of one who—

“Had fellowship with gorge and glen,
And learned the loves and runes of Nature.”

† Chief among these was Mr. N. D. Stenhouse, a wealthy scholar and a friend of scholars, who had known De Quincey and Sir William Hamilton, and to whom Sydney owes more than she remembers. Largely through Stenhouse, Kendall came to know Harpur, Deniehy, Dr. Woolley (first Headmaster of Rossall School, which post he had resigned to become the first Principal of the newly founded Sydney University), and Henry Halloran (who it was that gave Kendall his position in the Lands Office).

‡ In his *Poets and Prose Writers of New South Wales* (1866), Mr. G. B. Barton wrote of Kendall: “Should he live to realize the expectations that have been formed of him, his name will reflect a lasting honour on his native country.”

acceptation. Accordingly, he enclosed his book and some separate poems in a parcel, and sent it to the editor of the *Athenæum*, which gave him a kindly and discriminating notice. In 1866, Parkes, then colonial secretary in the Martin ministry, secured satisfactory promotion in the civil service for the poet, whom indeed he consistently befriended. In the following year Kendall met the lady who became his wife,* and his devotion

* He had been asked to lecture at the "School of Arts," a mechanics' institute in Sydney, and selected the perilous topic of "Love, Courtship, and Marriage." Always morbidly shy, the poet proved quite unable to make himself intelligible, or even audible, to those present, who slowly filtered out unsatisfied. Kendall's practice, however,—as frequently happens in such matters,—was better than his precept. After the lecture, a friend introduced him to his sister, and a walk home across Hyde Park, under the starry southern night, led to the poet's experience, in rapid succession, of the three 'waves' of his subject. It will be convenient here to trace the outlines of the remainder of the poet's life. After two years of happy love in Sydney, his weakness lost him his position, and drove him, a wanderer, into the larger capital of the rival colony of Victoria, to see if he would there make a living by his pen. In Melbourne he found that his poems had made him friends; and he soon was able to send for his wife and their child Araluen, whom he had called after his favourite stream. But his second volume of poems brought no grist to the mill; nor did the poet discover any aptitude for journalism, the convenient jackal of literature. At the Yorick Club and at the office of the *Colonial Monthly* he indeed made friends, who did what they could to put things in his way; A. L. Gordon, Marcus Clarke, M'Crae (the "Australian Longfellow"), 'Orion' Horne, and others. But Kendall was his own worst enemy. Premiers, editors, nor gods, can help those who cannot help themselves. At a time of his lowest degradation his child died,—a blow from which Kendall never

to whom was the ultimately victorious factor in his lifelong struggle with inherited alcoholism and consequent poverty.

Of the originality of Kendall's genius there can be no doubt. All English critics have realized his distinctive note. There is something of Wordsworth in him, something of Shelley, something of Tennyson. But, more than of any English poet, the impress of Australia is upon him. The beauty of the Australian bush, the pathos of Australian pioneering life, the bitterness of his own unrealized ideals,—these are the main subjects of his verse,* and each is treated with a sincerity and a distinction that no follower has approached.

altogether recovered. His wife and he returned to Sydney. Though brought to the door of an asylum, the miraculous armour of a woman's love won him back for the world. Retiring from town life and the eyes of hell that gleamed for him in every tavern window, he was employed as an overseer at their timber works by two friendly brothers, who redeem the name of Fagan from reproach, and in 1881 was created "Superintendent of State Forests" by Sir Henry Parkes: thus for eight or nine years he lived a tranquil, if not a happy, life. It is regrettable that the generous premier did not, while he was about it, boldly make Kendall Poet Laureate, or, if a Poet Laureate seemed an absurdity in an Australian colony, award him a pension for his poetry, without attaching any alien duties to the gift. As it was, the poet overtaxed a weakened constitution in discharging his new duties, and on August 1st, 1882, he died at the Fagans' Sydney house; his last desire being to live until the end of July, that his wife might receive the full month's salary. His countrymen, however, might be trusted, if not to buy his poems, yet to see that the poet's wife and children should not suffer want.

* Something of all three find utterance in the lines "On the

The verse of subsequent Australian rhymesters seems almost trivial beside the heart-broken lines in which Kendall speaks of the death of his baby-girl, Araluen :—

“ Ah, the saddest thought in leaving baby in the bush alone
 Is that we have not been able on her grave to place a stone.
 We have been too poor to do it ; but, my darling, never mind,
 God is in His gracious heaven, and His sun and rain are kind.
 They will dress the spot with beauty, they will make the grasses
 grow,
 Many winds will lull our birdie, many songs will come and go ;
 Here the blue-eyed spring will linger, here the shining month will
 stay
 Like a friend by Araluen, when we two are far away.

Paroo,” commemorating the murder of some colonists by the aboriginals :—

“ The wild men came upon them like a fire
 Of desert thunder, and the fierce firm lips
 That touched a mother’s lips a year before,
 And hands that knew a dearer hand than life,
 Were hewn like sacrifice before the stars
 And left with hooting owls and blowing clouds
 And falling leaves and solitary wings . . .

Oh dear, dead bleaching bones, I know of those
 Who have the wild strong will to go and sit
 Outside all things with you, and keep the ways
 Aloof from bats and snakes and trampling feet
 That smite your peace and theirs . . .

Turn thyself and sing,
 Sing, Son of Sorrow. Is there any gain
 For breaking of the loins, for melting eyes,
 And knees as weak as water ? . . . Any balm
 For pleading women, and the love that knows
 Of nothing left to love ? ”

"Girl, whose hand at God's high altar in the dear dead year I
pressed,
Lean your stricken head upon me ; this is still your lover's
breast. . . .
Three there were, but one has vanished ; sins of mine have made
you weep,
But forgive your baby's father, now that baby is asleep. . . .
None will ever, Araluen, nestle where you used to be
In my heart of hearts, you darling, when the world was new
to me."

We forgive the fault of taste,—venial when compared to Tennyson's "costlier funeral," where there is no excuse of strong personal emotion,—in the depth of the feeling and the tender music of its expression.

It is assuredly in Kendall's *Lyrics of the Leaf and Stream* that we find the first utterances of essentially Australian genius. Sometimes, indeed, for all his usual freedom from the 'colonial fallacy,' the influence of English traditions is too strong for him. Thus when he speaks of bell-birds singing "in September their songs of the May-time," or in his "Austral Months" says that in the Australian December—

"Clear summer streams their sweet hosannas sing,"

there is overt or tacit reference to the English seasons he had never known. But generally, unlike Gordon, he sees Australian nature through purely Australian eyes. He described that nature as it has never been described ; and if, judged in accordance with his potentialities, he was, as he

felt himself to be, a failure,* his failure has hitherto transcended any other Australian's success.

There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between Kendall and his contemporary and fellow-poet Adam Lindsay Gordon, the 'laureate of the centaurs.' The one a "small, dark, fragile, poetical-looking man," † a clerk by training, a poet by instinct; delicate, sensitive, shrinking from noisy activity. The other a tall, squarely built, open-faced Englishman, by training a soldier, by instinct a rider and writer of horses. The one with his utter lack of sympathy for the healthy insanity of field sports; the other with all the zeal and all the prowess of the sportsman.‡ For the rest,

* "After many years" is sad reading, for all its beauty. The wistful melancholy in such utterances as—

"I sit where youth was once, and feel
That I am growing cold,"

or

"My spirit fancies it can hear
The song I cannot sing."

overpowers even the sweetness of the verse.

† A. Patchett Martin, from personal recollection, *vide* preface to SLADEN'S *Australian Poets*.

‡ Kendall, as an Australian, felt it his duty to write something of racing. But while Kendall, it has been well said, "wrote like a poet who had been to the races, Gordon wrote like a poet who had raced" (D. B. W. SLADEN: *Study of Kendall as a Bush-Poet*, prefixed to *Australian Ballads*). Gordon's stanza on the zest of danger in sport is by now an Australian proverb:

'No game was ever yet worth a rap
For a rational man to play
Into which no accident, no mishap,
Could possibly find its way."

Gordon was a devotee of Byronic styles and metres, with something of Browning's spirit, and alas! something of Mrs. Browning's ear for rhyme. His nature was in much the masculine complement of the almost femininely sensitive temperament of Kendall. Gordon could no more have written :

"There is a river in the range
I love to think about ;
Perhaps the searching feet of change
Have never found it out,"

than Kendall was capable of the manly stoicism of the galloping quatrain :

"Life is mostly froth and bubble ;
Two things stand like stone :
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own."

It is in accordance with an ironic fate that it was the delicate querulous poet that fought his trouble and came out shaken but victorious, while it was the strong, breezy preacher of manliness who surrendered to the continued assaults of fortune, and blew his brains out among the Brighton heather.

Gordon was an Englishman of Scottish descent (his father an army ex-captain), whose wildness had led to his emigration,* in 1853, to South

* He was born at the Azores ; educated at Cheltenham College, at Woolwich, and for a time at Merton College, Oxford. His wildness brought him into conflict with those in authority, and was the despair of his melancholiac mother. In his twentieth year he formed an attachment for a Cheltenham farmer's daughter. But

Australia, a youth of twenty. Like Henry Kingsley, he shewed no great aptitude as a colonist. Two years in the mounted police were followed by several years as a horse-breaker,—for which his wonderful sympathy with, and power over, equine creation, well adapted him. He moved on from station to station, a tall, strange, silent fellow, with an “honest pair of grey eyes,” and “gleams,” as Froude says, “of a most noble nature.”

It was at this period of his life that Gordon was befriended by the Rev. Father Woods, a bush cleric, who seems to have had even more than his share of that kindly tact which the experience of

his parents thought the match beneath him, while her parents regarded him as unlikely to make a steady husband. Indeed, such lines as these were, it has been observed, scarcely calculated to conciliate respectability :

“ Here’s a health to every sportsman, be he stableman or lord,
If his heart be true, I care not what his pocket may afford ;
And may he ever pleasantly each gallant sport pursue,
If he takes his liquor fairly, and his fences fairly too.”

The girl herself had her confidence in her tall, grey-eyed, rather incomprehensible lover, rudely shaken by a horse-borrowing escapade (Gordon was already race-mad) ; so when he came and told her that her refusal meant for him Australian exile, she found the strength of caution to resist his entreaties. Thus Gordon, with introductions in his wallet and bitterness in his soul, set out for the Golden Continent. A boyish set of verses to his sister Ignez exhibits the feelings with which he left home :

“ With adverse fate we best can cope
When all we prize is fled ;
And when there’s little left to hope
There’s little left to dread.”

generations has taught men to associate with the Roman priesthood. He found the poet friendless * and bookless, except for a copy of Macaulay's Lays. He lent him his books,—Horace, Browning, Byron, the latter an old favourite with Gordon. The poet-horsebreaker had an abnormal memory ; already much of Scott was part of his permanent mental furniture. To this was now added the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, and some of the more obvious poems of Browning.

In 1862, the year of Kendall's first volume, Gordon married Miss Maggie Park, niece of the landlady of a "forlorn little inn" at Robe town. Out together they rode from Robe to Mount

* "Many men," says the good priest, "much his inferiors in every way, used to be asked to the squatter's table, while, except in a few, a very few places, my poet friend would be sent to the men's hut,"—which would seem, however, to have been largely a matter of choice on Gordon's part.

On the same authority we have an illuminating little anecdote of the poet's life at this period. At a certain country town where a race meeting was to be held, Gordon, as a 'gentleman jockey,' applied for permission to ride for the coveted distinction of the Ladies' Purse. The ladies in question, however, refused the permission. Only gentlemen, they said, might enter. The race was actually won, contrary to expectation, by the son of an ex-publican squatter. The disappointed ladies, we are told, removed most of the valuables from the 'purse' before they presented it. "This," says Father Woods, "Gordon knew ; and his comments upon it were very cynical." (Vide *The Laureate of the Centaurs*, being the Memoir of Gordon by J. H. ROSS (1888). SUTHERLAND and TURNER'S *Development of Australian Literature* (1898), contains interesting biographies of Gordon, Kendall, and Clarke ; to which I am much indebted.)

Gambier, an eighty-mile ride to the nearest church. It is pleasant to think of these 'forest-lovers,' this strange red-cross knight and his Una, riding out to wedlock

"Through the green and gold of the summer woods." *

Two years of cottage love beneath the shadow of Mount Gambier, and Gordon learnt that £7000 left him by his mother had long been waiting his discovery ;—" *aurum irreperitum et sic melius situm*," to use one of the Latin tags on which the poet so prided himself.

The joys of capitalism were disastrous and short-lived. Gordon invested in two local 'stations' and some valueless West Australian property. However, the gold specific worked a miraculous cure on the general blindness as to the uncouth poet's deserts. He was asked to stand for parliament in the anti-squatter interest, and consented, with the characteristic proviso that he would not "bind himself neck and heels to do the bidding of the electors." But he made no mark during his two years' membership, except for eccentricity, classical allusions,† and a talent for verse. Gordon retained his

* *Ashtaroth*. Cf. the detailed account of Agatha's elopement on horseback with Harold.

† One inconsequent harangue is recorded, containing no less than a dozen quotations from Horace, and allusions to ancient divinities that must have caused many a flutter in such dusty mythological dictionaries as had found their way to South Australia.

passion for horses, and, by winning in 1868 three steeplechases in one day, achieved the reputation of the most brilliant rider in Australia.

But despondency, largely due to money difficulties, grew upon him; and, although he found friends and admirers in Marcus Clarke and Kendall,* while his verse grew every day more popular, he now rode "in the secret hope of being killed." In March, 1870, he had a serious fall from his horse. The May mails cheered him with favourable English reviews of his *Sea-spray and Smoke-drift*. But the mails of June brought the disappointment of what had seemed the certain hope of succession to the Esslemont barony, the one means of relief for his monetary embarrassments. Overcome with despair, he took his life at Brighton near Melbourne, at the age of thirty-seven.

To-day Gordon is, without doubt, the most popular poet † in Australia; an Australian Burns, loved and quoted, recited and read, in every homestead from Barrier Reef to St. George's Sound. The secret of his success is an open secret. The key-notes of his muse were a love of manliness,

* Kendall spoke of him as the "strongest poet in Australia," and praised his "ringing major notes" and

"Deep autumnal half-prophetic tone
Of forest woods in March."

† A large Sydney wholesale bookseller tells me that his firm still sells four hundred to five hundred copies of Gordon per annum to about two dozen of Kendall. The difference in price of the volumes (2s. 6d. and 7s. 6d.) partly, but only partly, accounts for this.

a love of adventure, a love of horses, and a love of honest dealing; and these are the key-notes of the Australian character.

His verse lacks distinction of form. Little or none is technically perfect; much of it is beneath the level of a clever schoolboy; most of it is disfigured by curiously un-Australian Latin tags, the relics of Cheltenham. But distinction of form was not required. A stirring writer of galloping verse, with a keen (though vague) appreciation of natural beauty, a touch of 'sentiment,' a working knowledge of bush life, and a "manly admiration of healthy living,"—this was, and is, the poet for Australia.

No one realized more than Gordon the limitations of his muse. His verses are, he says in his dedication to Whyte Melville :

"Rhymes rudely strung with intent less
Of sound than of words,
In lands where bright blossoms are scentless,
And songless bright birds." *

If we put aside his philosophic musings, mostly unoriginal in form and matter, we see that much of his verse was inspired by English memories, while much is in imitation of the quasi-mediæval romantic

* It has been frequently pointed out that these lines constitute a libel on the crooning carol of the 'magpie' at least, and on some of the most fragrant wild flowers in the world. It has not been so generally noted that the poet himself, in *Whisperings in Wattle Boughs*, contradicts both libels in the couplet :

"Oh, gaily sings the bird and the wattle boughs are stirred
And rustled by the scented breath of spring."

ballad-verse of the day. But though "How we beat the Favourite,"—perhaps his most popular effort,—is of the first class, and "Fauconshawe" and the "Rhyme of the Joyous Guard,"* of the second, shew imaginative power, rapidity, and vigour, yet it is in his Australian poems, such as "Wolf and Hound" and the "Sick Stock-rider" that he reaches his highest level. I quote the last lines of the latter poem as eminently characteristic of the man and of the people :

"For good undone and gifts mis-spent and resolutions vain
 'Tis somewhat late to trouble ; this I know—
 I should live the same life over, if I had to live again ;
 And the chances are I go where most men go.
 The deep blue skies wax dusky, and the tall green trees grow dim,
 The sword beneath me seems to heave and fall ;
 And sickly smoky shadows through the sleepy sunlight swim,
 And on the very sun's face weave their pall.
 Let me slumber in the hollow where the wattle blossoms wave,
 With never stone or rail to fence my bed,
 Should the sturdy station children pull the bush-flowers on my
 grave,
 I may chance to hear them romping overhead." †

* Francis Adams considered this poem worth 'all the *Idylls of the King*,' with two exceptions. "The one great poem," he says, "yet written in Australia."

† With the sentiment of the concluding couplet it is interesting to compare the omitted stanza of Gray's elegy :

"There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
 By hands unseen, are showers of violets found ;
 The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
 And little footsteps lightly tread the ground."

The one seems to me as distinctively Australian as the other is English.

In connexion with Gordon's death, it is on record that the poet,

Marcus Clarke, the third of the triumvirate of contemporary Australian writers, was an Englishman of eccentric education and mercurial temperament. He joined the staff of the Melbourne *Argus* in 1867,—the year of Kendall's engagement and of Gordon's first volume,—and shared with Gordon and Kendall the chronic impecuniosity of Australian genius. His bohemian temperament is most instructively seen in the fact that after his wedding ceremony he set out to search for a lodging to which he might take his bride. He died of money-lenders and disappointment in his thirty-sixth year.

The novel on which his fame rests, *For the Term of his Natural Life*, has won praise from diverse critics. To Lord Rosebery it is "the most terrible of all novels." It has been translated into several foreign languages. The genius displayed in it is perhaps that rather of a journalist than of a great writer of fiction. Every fact found in the records of the dismal convict era is marshalled with amazing force. But of the magic of the imagination that creates from ink and paper living men and women, distinct and individual, of the art of contrast and the religion of reticence, there is too little in his crowded pages. Yet if Zola was on the advice of Marcus Clarke and others, omitted a stanza from the "Sick Stock-rider," ending with the couplet :

"Yet some as weak as water, Ned, to make the best of life
Have been, to face the worst, as true as steel."

a great novelist, it is hard to deny the title to this Australian 'realist,' who displayed kindred talents, though, of course, in a more limited field.*

A fourth contemporary of Kendall and Gordon was Mr. J. Brunton Stephens, whose *Convict Once* relates in cultivated and thoughtful verse a pathetic story of the early days.

Of the life of the pastoral pioneers, whose period was intermediate between the Iron Age of the convicts and the Golden Age of the miners, the best picture has been left us by Henry Kingsley in his charming novel of *Geoffrey Hamlyn*. Mr. T. A. Browne ('Rolf Boldrewood') has recorded the epoch of the Bushrangers (may we say the Steel Age?) in *Robbery under Arms*, and has told the tale of squatterdom in the *Squatter's Dream*, and many other stories. He is the Australian Trollope, a reliable and readable chronicler of the more obvious aspects of Australian life.

The more complex and elusive characteristics of the Commonwealth's society and politics have

* Of Clarke's shorter pieces, *Pretty Dick*, the tale of the all-too-frequent Australian tragedy implied in the brief words "lost in the bush," stands easily first for pathos and for its admirable truth to the facts of Australian scenery.

Of his essays may be noted a truculent article on Lord Beaconsfield's novels, the preface to Gordon's poems, and the essay on the future Australian race. The latter two are referred to elsewhere.

been best sketched for English readers in the form of fiction by Mrs. Campbell Praed ; but her absence from the country has put her in some degree out of touch with modern conditions.

These conditions find their ablest exponents in the imaginative writers both in prose and poetry who are classed together as the '*Bulletin* School,' from the name of the weekly paper* which has for the last decade at least been the chief Australian medium for original literature, a school of which Boake, Paterson, Lawson, Ogilvie, and Daly have been, or are, the most prominent members.

Of these, Boake, the Australian Keats in his high promise and his early death, has left us one or two poems of rare 'singing' quality, virility, and force, if he has also left much that is worthless jingle. "Down where the dead men lie" stands

* The Sydney *Bulletin*, to which reference has been already made more than once in the course of these pages, has a world-wide reputation for wit and audacity, and is at once the Australian *Punch*, *Spectator*, *Truth*, *Notes and Queries*, *Financial Times*, and *Sporting and Dramatic News*,—indeed, a very Pooh-bah among papers in the multiplicity of its functions. Francis Adams, that acute if acid critic of things Australian, speaks of it as the "only mouthpiece of originality in Australia," and relates how a back-blocks' shearer once told him that "if he had only sixpence left, he would buy the *Bulletin* with it." Whatever may be thought of the anti-religious and separatist principles of this 'Bushman's Bible,' it must be conceded to have done a very real service to Australia in the encouragement of literature. Ability, within certain lines, is always sure of a welcome in the *Bulletin*.

alone in Australian verse, and the hand that wrote it might have done great work.*

A. B. Paterson was the first of the "*Bulletin School*" to achieve the honour of publication in presentable book form. A Sydney publishing firm † had the good sense to see that his verse,—for some time a leading attraction of the *Bulletin*,—would meet with a ready sale, and the enterprise to purchase the copyright and to issue the volume in their name. Success was immediate. First published in 1895, Paterson's *Man from Snowy River* is now in its twenty-third thousand. "No living English or American poet," says the *Literary Year Book for 1900*, "can boast so wide a public, always excepting Mr. Kipling,"—to whom, indeed,

* I quote the first and fifth stanzas :

" Out on the wastes of the Never Never,
That's where the dead men lie !
That's where the heat waves dance for ever,
That's where the dead men lie !
That's where the earth's loved sons are keeping
Endless tryst : not the west wind sweeping
Feverish pinions can wake their sleeping—
Out where the dead men lie !

" Only the hand of Night can free them,
That's when the dead men fly.
Only the frightened cattle see them,—
See the dead men go by !
Cloven hoofs beating out one measure,
Bidding the stockman know no leisure—
That's when the dead men take their pleasure,
That's when the dead men fly."

† Messrs. Angus and Robertson.

the *Times* compares him. The publication of the verses and tales of Lawson and other *Bulletin* writers quickly followed; until now there is an annual sale of twenty-five thousand volumes * of the publications of this one firm.

It must be frankly admitted that much of the *Man from Snowy River* is not poetry, and does not pretend to be. But it is excellent verse inspired with keen love of horse-flesh, shrewd good sense, cynical humour, and a true though undemonstrative affection for the Australian bush.†

Of the other *Bulletin* writers Victor Daly and Ogilvie have each a public in Australia; and though neither reach great poetic heights, there is a grace and meditative fancy in the one and a bush music in the other, that conciliate criticism.

But of all modern Australian writers Henry

* This is exclusive of school-books.

† It is in illustration of the last quality that these lines are quoted from *Clancy of the Overflow*:

“As the stock comes slowly stringing, Clancy rides behind them
singing,
For the drover's life has pleasures that the townsfolk never know.
And the bush has friends to meet him and their kindly voices
greet him
In the murmur of the breezes and the river on its bars;
And he sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended,
And at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars.”

It would be hard to find a more rapid sketch of all that is charming in the Australian bush. A few skilful touches, and that with quite ordinary pigments, and what a picture is produced!

Lawson excites, or has excited, the greatest expectations. His verse at its best has a true poetic ring, rough in expression, but with the roughness of truth and the natural beauty of complete sincerity. He writes of the bush not as a gentleman on horseback, with the comforts of civilization always 'within coo-ee,' which he "can drop into at will;" but as one that has had to tramp the Australian saharas, 'swag' on back, in hungry quest for work. Lawson has no joy in horses. Indeed, he speaks with audacious scorn of those who

"Immortalize in verse

The gambling and the drink that are their country's greatest
curse."

But he has a keen eye for pathos in the commonplace, and the unerring instinct of genius in getting at the heart of things and saying more in half a line than most men in a volume. He has glimpses, too, of a creed other than the usual negative creed of revolt found in *Bulletin* writers; the hopeful creed of an ultimate millennium; when, as he sings in "For'ard,"—the half-humorous, half-envious reflections of a steerage passenger on the comfort of those in the saloon:—

"We all will meet amidships on this stout old earthly craft,
And there won't be any friction 'twixt the classes fore 'n' aft.
We'll be brothers, fore 'n' aft,
Yes, an' sisters, fore 'n' aft,
When the people work together and there ain't no fore 'n' aft."

In "Marshall's Mate," "Out Back," and other

poems in his first and best volume *In the Days when the World was Wide*, there is an intensity of force, a bitter realization of the gloom and sordid monotony of existence in the drought-smitten areas of the back country, that grip the imagination. In his "Star of Australasia" he attains to "something of prophetic strain;" though if the war he looks to be a war of independence against England, he assuredly reckons without his host.

Lawson's prose work has even more admirers than his poems, and such stories in *While the Billy Boils* as the "Bush Undertaker" and the "Drover's Wife" are amazing in their truth and intensity, their subtle blending of grim humour and reticent pathos. Whether this talented Australian will prove himself capable of more sustained effort, whether he will leave anything more than the fifty pages or so of excellent work that has to be sifted from much mere journalism, lies yet 'upon the knees of the gods.'*

* It has been thought best to confine our attention to such Australian writers as seemed most characteristic and distinctive. Even so, many other names might be mentioned: Edward Dyson (the miner's laureate), Robert Richardson, A. D. Bayldon, J. Brereton, Essex Evans, T. Heney, J. B. O'Hara, Louise Mack, Ethel Turner, and Roderick Quinn,—all more or less intimately connected with the *Bulletin*. Mr. C. Brennan's *Towards the Source*, though by no means distinctively Australian,—one might almost say distinctively un-Australian,—shews a real, if but semi-articulate, power struggling beneath a pile of affectations. The list of writers more or less connected with Australia might, of course, be extended indefinitely. Thus valuable works in economics and

In concluding this brief survey, a wish may perhaps be expressed without offence that the *Bulletin* school will be succeeded by a group of writers of a healthier and less gloomy stamp. The world, the poet tells us, "is made for each of us," and affords material for every philosophy. Australia is no exceptional tract of land, destined to the propagation of melancholiacs. If she has her desert plains, she has also vast tracts of eastern coast-land, where the rich meadow-grass lies deep,

politics were written by Professor Hearn and Mr. C. H. H. Pearson during their residence in Australia. 'Orion' Horne was a distinguished literary figure in the Melbourne of Kendall's day. The history of G. W. Rusden is a painstaking achievement, and Messrs. Quick and Garra's *Annotated Constitution* a permanent contribution to Australian law and history. The late Professor Morris' *George Higinbotham* is the best Australian biography, and his *Austral English* is an interesting and useful guide to Australian philology. Good work has been done in biography and criticism by writers whose names have already been mentioned in connexion with Kendall and Gordon; and scientific investigation has found competent expositors. Recently Mr. Abbott, in his *Tommy Cornstalk*, has added a notable volume to the literature of the South African War.

Of novelists, Mrs. Humphry Ward can be claimed as an Australian; for the first five (and, according to Jesuit educational theories, the most important five) years of her life were spent in Tasmania. 'Ada Cambridge,' Mary Gaunt, Louis Becke, Hume Nisbet, Guy Boothby, as well as Haddon Chambers, the playwright,—are all in greater or less degree Australians; and there are many other names. *My Brilliant Career* shews great promise. The writer is an Australian bush girl, childishy egotistic, naïvely illiterate. But she has a firm grasp of some aspects of Australian country-life,—and of the reader's attention, if not his sympathy. In the literature of feminine revolt the book constitutes a kind of Australian footnote to Miss Schreiner's *African Farm*.

and the streams are swept full from the mountains. If she has her dismal iron-roofed shanties, she has also pleasant country homesteads, where families settle down and grow to territorial magnates, as in the little old land oversea. If there are the hot dry days, there are also the cool star-spangled nights ; and bright warm months in autumn, and in spring

“ When the wattle gold trembles
 ’Twixt shadow and shine,
When each dew-laden air-draught resembles
 A long draught of wine.”

The spirit of revolt is only salutary when combined with the spirit of reform. But, beyond a somewhat narrow conception of patriotism, the *Bulletin* has no ideals with which to supplement the dissatisfaction with reality which she encourages in her “nest of singing birds.” What the Commonwealth seems to require is a new centre for her literary activities, a new and healthier atmosphere for her imaginative work, some literary force such as America found in J. R. Lowell ; some great writer who, while endowed with original views of art and literature, will yet not hold that “phthisis is a phase of genius,” nor that “good writing is really a disease of the nervous system ;” * who will not be a foe to religion, to culture, or to loyalty ; who will not look upon

* *Vide* an article on “Australian Literature” in the *Commonwealth Annual*, 1901, by Mr. A. G. STEPHENS, editor of the literary page of the *Bulletin*.

Australian universities as mere "declension shops;" but will prove the long-looked-for means of bringing them into touch with the life of the community.

Under such a man, whether university professor or editor of an *Australian Magazine* (for repeated failures in the separate colonies need not argue failure in an united Commonwealth), the literature of Australia would,—nay, will, for such men are born when there is need of them,—become at once sane and original; original not in the sense of the word in which the old Greek city states attained their independent fruitions of original genius; (one 'cannot step twice into the same river,' and the day of mountain-cloistered or sea-moated originality is dead; nor could a Cervantes and a Shakespeare to-day be contemporaries ignorant of each other's existence,)—but original in that it is literature which, though informed and coloured with the imaginative thought of the world, yet faithfully reflects the distinctive conditions of Australian life.

CHAPTER X

THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Natural Wealth—Manufactures—'Lions in the Path'

AUSTRALIA is, if natural resources are considered in proportion to population, the richest country in the world. Although the united population of the six colonies is under four millions, the total production for 1899 was valued at no less than £112,000,000, or over £30 for each inhabitant. If the value of manufactures be subtracted, the primary industries alone give a total of £83,600,000, or about £22 per inhabitant.

The primary production of the United Kingdom is, according to Mulhall, but £7 18s. 6d. a head, and of France, the most productive European country, but £11 11s. The United States reach £14 14s., and Canada £16 5s. 6d.; but Australia stands easily first. Mr. T. A. Coghlan, the Government statist for New South Wales, states that "in production per head, Australasia *

* The average for Australasia is not greatly in excess of that for Australia, the addition of New Zealand bringing the total production to nearly £31, and the primary production to £23 8s. 4d. per head.

exceeds any other country for which records are available."*

Not less striking results are obtained if we pass to consider the totals of export and import trade. The Commonwealth's imports for 1899 totalled £63,000,000; her exports, £77,000,000. Her whole trade for the year was thus £140,000,000, or nearly £38 per head.

The largest item in the national wealth is undoubtedly the value of the products of the sheep. In 1899, after a succession of droughts, the total of Australian flocks was still seventy-four millions, about twenty times the number of the human population. When Captain Phillip first colonized Australia, bringing with him among his convicts twenty-nine live sheep, he little dreamed that they were to be the ancestors of such a gigantic family. Not, of course, that they were the sole ancestors; still, with accessions from India and elsewhere, they had by 1800 increased to some six thousand. Three years previously to that date, an epoch in Australian economic history was caused by Macarthur's securing from the Cape some valuable rams and ewes that had been presented by the King of Spain to the Dutch colonists. These, bred carefully with the best of the Australian sheep, produced the

* *The Seven Colonies*, p. 612. "From primary industries," he continues, "Australasia produces more per inhabitant than is produced by the combined industries of any other country."

famous Macarthur flocks, soon to make Australia known as providing some of the finest wool in the world. Further merinos were introduced from Spain in 1823 and 1825, and the quality of the best Spanish wool was found not to deteriorate, but to improve, under Australian skies. As time has gone on, the weight of the fleece has been gradually increased, without deterioration in its quality. Enormous as is the number of sheep in Australia, its stock-carrying capacity has not yet been nearly reached, Mr. Coghlan estimating that, in addition to the 74,000,000 sheep already pastured, there is room in Australia, in ordinary seasons, for another 167,000,000 sheep,* or an equivalent number of cattle. Australia derives from the sheep an annual income of more than £30,000,000, of which nearly £23,000,000 is for wool exported to England and elsewhere.†

Nearly ten million head of cattle were pastured

* *The Seven Colonies*, p. 484. In 1891 the numbers had reached 106,000,000.

† As food, the merino sheep is inferior to the cross-bred animal ; and Australia, which has few cross-breeds, finds some difficulty in disposing of the surplus cast after the local meat market has been supplied. New Zealand frozen mutton finds a ready sale in England, but Australian merino mutton is in less demand. New South Wales, however, in 1899 exported £460,000 worth of frozen mutton [this sum includes the value of 32,000 quarters of beef], and Victoria £86,000 worth [this sum includes the value of 1458 cwt. of beef] ; and there is a prospect, at any rate if cross-breeding is encouraged, of a large increase in the frozen meat trade, as the prejudice against Australian mutton dies out in England.

in the Commonwealth in 1899, Queensland being responsible for half this number. This represents a value of £43,000,000. Most of the animals are required for the local food-supply; but Queensland annually exports frozen and preserved beef to the value of over £1,000,000.

More than a million and a half of horses (worth about £14,000,000) are at present in existence in Australia. Though but little has hitherto been done in the export trade, this may well grow,—the Australian horse, in India, South Africa, and elsewhere, having acquired a reputation for strength and endurance.

Large areas of land, especially in Victoria, are well adapted for dairy farming; cheese, butter, and eggs being produced in numbers already far in excess of local demands, and capable of indefinite increase. More than £6,000,000 worth of dairy and swine produce was produced in Australia in 1899, more than £1,000,000 worth of butter being exported for the English market.*

The total value of the pastoral and dairy produce for the Commonwealth for the year is estimated at £41,000,000, or £11 2s. 2d. per inhabitant.

* New Zealand cheese and butter have hitherto been largely exported to Australia, especially New South Wales; but the federal tariff is likely to curtail the trade considerably, and make Australia rely, in this matter as in others, upon her own resources.

Much of Australia is never likely to be of any value as agricultural country; but there can be little doubt that many hundreds of square miles at present devoted to grazing will in time be brought under the plough. Already the crops of the Commonwealth total nearly £18,000,000 in annual value, about three-sevenths of the annual pastoral production.* More than seven million more acres are now in cultivation than there were in 1861, an increase shewing the average rate of 5 per cent.

Wheat is the chief crop, comprising 25 per cent. of the whole. Next follow hay, roots, oats, fruit, and maize. Though the wheat yield per acre is very small, averaging only $8\frac{1}{2}$ bushels an acre,† the quality is good, and the yield is capable of being largely increased by improved methods of cultivation.

As it is, although the annual consumption of wheat per head,—6·3 bushels,—is, with two exceptions,‡ larger than that of any country in the world, Australia has for the last twenty years been able to grow sufficient wheat to supply all its necessities, and, in normal years, leave

* The agricultural production of the Commonwealth is of the value of £4 8s. per head, as compared with £3 2s. in the United Kingdom, £3 5s. in Russia, £4 6s. in Italy, £1 3s. in Cape Colony.

† The average yield of France is $18\frac{1}{2}$ bushels per acre; of England, nearly 31 bushels. The Australian yield varies from 4·69 bushels in South Australia to 19·05 in Tasmania.

‡ France and Canada.

something over for export.* In 1899 the value of exported breadstuffs reached £1,500,000.

The cultivation of oats is gradually increasing in Australia: it received a stimulus from the South African war, and is likely to receive more lasting encouragement from the duty on New Zealand oats imposed by the Barton tariff. At present three hundred and seventy thousand acres are in cultivation.†

Maize is an important crop in New South Wales and Queensland, though it does not enter, as in America, into consumption as an article of human food. More barley might well be grown;‡ and the same may be said of potatoes, growers of which in Victoria, Tasmania, and New South Wales, may hope to benefit from the tariff.§

Fruit and other produce of gardens and orchards in 1899 were valued at £1,800,000.

The sum of £600,000 was produced from the

* In only four years since 1879 have importations of wheat been necessary. (*Seven Colonies*, p. 515.)

† The value of the 1899 crop was £728,000. The average yield per acre, 20 bushels. The value of the New Zealand oat-crop for 1899 was £1,436,000, a larger area being under oats in that colony than in Australia, and the average yield per acre being twice as great. As a wheat-producing country, on the other hand, New Zealand, in 1899, produced but 8,500,000 bushels to the Commonwealth's 40,000,000.

‡ In 1899 the barley crop was worth £380,000.

§ Under it New Zealand potatoes will be largely excluded: hitherto, especially in New South Wales, they have largely interfered with local production.

sugar-cane crop, mainly in Queensland. It is a moot point whether the industry will be seriously hampered by the Commonwealth legislation against the Kanaka, or imported South Sea labourer; but public opinion runs strong that if the industry is only possible at the price of the introduction of a colour-question, it will be better to lose the industry than the homogeneity of race that is the distinctive privilege of Australia among British colonies.*

The grape grows well in Australia, and Australian wines may one day be among the country's most profitable industries. It was in 1828 that cuttings of the famous French, Spanish, and German vines were first planted in New South Wales. That colony has since then been outstripped by Victoria and South Australia, but still produces annually some 800,000 gallons. There seems no reason why, with due care and skill, Australian wines should not be made to rival European vintages.†

From the date of its first discovery in Australia, the states of the Commonwealth have produced gold to the value of £372,000,000, two-thirds of which was raised from the one small state of

* It is said that the beet is easily grown in many parts of Australia, and that from it, by modern processes, a high percentage of sugar would be obtained. But Victoria made an unsuccessful attempt to set the beet-sugar industry on a paying basis.

† The total value of the Australian grape-crop for 1899 was £930,000.

Victoria. In the year 1899-1900, out of the world's total production of £64,000,000 worth of gold, nearly 25 per cent. came from Australia.*

Silver, raised mainly in New South Wales, was of the value of £2,475,000; and copper, mainly in South Australia, of £2,074,000.†

Coal to the value of £39,000,000 has been extracted from Australia, more than seven-eighths coming from New South Wales. The coal is of excellent quality, and the average value raised by each of the 10,000 miners is £129 7s. 5d., the highest in the world.‡

Iron exists in proximity to coal at Mittagong and in many other parts of New South Wales and other states; but no considerable attempt has been made to face the world's competition. Under the protective system initiated by the Commonwealth we may, however, expect that the vast iron wealth of the continent will no longer be suffered to 'fust unused.'

Grouping all minerals together, we find that the mineral production for the Commonwealth in

* The total production in Australia for 1899 was of the value of £14,661,000, of which Western Australia produced £6,246,000; Victoria, £3,418,000; New South Wales, £1,751,000. The number of miners in 1899 was about 80,000.

† Tin was raised in 1899 (mainly in Tasmania) to the value of £475,000.

‡ The average amount raised per miner in the United States of America is £118 16s. 3d.; in the United Kingdom, £90 15s. 6d.; in Austria, £56 4s. 9d. The value of the coal extracted in 1899 in Australia is £1,658,000.

1899 was more than £22,000,000, or £6 per head of population, and that since 1852 no less than £500,000,000 represents the Australian contribution to the mineral wealth of the world.

The manufactures of the Commonwealth, immense as may be their developement in the future, are already not to be despised. Their total value for 1899 was £28,000,000,—within five million pounds of the total of pastoral returns, and six millions in excess of the proceeds of mineral primary industries. In Australian factories some 170,000 operatives are employed, and their numbers shew a steady increase in every colony.* Of these some 35,000 are employed in clothing and textile industries, and some 30,000 each in metal

* Since 1893 the numbers have increased in Victoria from 39,473 to 60,070 ; in New South Wales from 38,918 to 55,646 ; in Queensland from 13,369 to 27,200 ; each year shewing an increase in every colony. It may be noted that of the operatives in Victoria 16,029 are women ; of those in New South Wales 8583. These figures were much emphasized during the first federal election, the number of women hands in Victoria being attributed to the malign influence of protection. The difference is fully accounted for by the fact that the textile and clothing manufactories of Victoria (in which it is that the women are chiefly employed) are much larger than those of New South Wales, and hence, naturally, employ more women ; while in New South Wales, on the other hand, industries in connection with shipbuilding, treatment of pastoral products, metal works, and machinery (all of them essentially men's trades), are, for natural reasons, the larger. Moreover, the free-trade exponents omitted to mention that while the number of women employed in Victorian factories has not much more than doubled since 1885, that of those employed in New South Wales factories has almost quadrupled. (*Vide Seven Colonies*, pp. 598, 599).

works, and in the preparation of articles of food. The other main headings are building materials, treatment of pastoral products, shipbuilding, furniture, printing, and saddlery.

These industries have hitherto flourished in spite of grievous restrictions, which in many instances had the effect of confining commodities to the state in which they were produced. Not the least benefit of federation is that on the promulgation of the first federal tariff, all inter-state duties were abolished, and whereas each state had previously but one market, now each has six. This must at first involve a certain amount of disorganization of industry. The principle of local specialization will come into play, and in particular commodities it is likely that the manufacturers, in some cases of New South Wales, in others of Victoria, in others again of Queensland, will beat their rivals out of the market, until each state learns for what industries it is best adapted. Thus, while the dangers of excessive free trade will be modified by extra-Australian protection, the dangers of excessive protection will be modified by inter-state free trade: on the one hand, the nation's industries will not be ruined by foreign competition; on the other hand, inter-state competition will prevent the fostering of unsuitable industries and the consequent payment by the people of exorbitant prices, both directly as taxpayers, and indirectly as consumers. So we may

expect in the fulness of time a well-developed nation of many-sided economic activity, as free as England and as self-sufficing as America.

It were hard to set a limit to the economic possibilities of Australia, were it not for the existence of three 'lions' that seem to bar the path of progress. The first is that ghastly ravenous monster across whose flaming eyes is written the name of Drought.

While the prosperity of Australia depends so largely upon its pastoral and agricultural products, it is clear that any long series of waterless years must give her a ruinous set-back. In the years of drought subsequent to 1891 the one state of New South Wales has lost more than 25,000,000 sheep; and the longer continuance of the drought must almost inevitably have brought financial disaster.* Unfortunately, continued droughts are the normal condition of a large portion of Australia, 1,219,600 square miles having an annual rainfall of under ten inches. Till 1879 this vast territory

* [At the time when this was written (in 1901), the drought had partially broken. It is only now, however (December, 1902), that a complete break-up appears to have occurred. Meanwhile it is to be feared that large additional numbers, both of sheep and cattle, have succumbed,—reducing the figures given on page 213 by perhaps another 20 per cent. Details are not yet procurable; and by the time they are, good rains may have set Australian flocks and herds once more on the increase. A Queensland squatter tells the writer that within twenty years he has twice seen his herds reduced to 3000, and twice raised them again to 30,000.]

seemed doomed to remain an eternal desert, but in that year the wonderful discovery was made that beneath the torrid waste comprising so much of Central Australia lay 'sunken treasures' of a gigantic subterranean sea, only awaiting the mattock of man to rise from its dark sepulchre and flood the starving earth with plenty. It was at the Kallara Run, New South Wales, that artesian water was first found, and since then numerous experiments, both by governments and private persons, have tapped the titanic waters. The Government of New South Wales has completed 82 wells, of which 56 were successful, and are still flowing, the aggregate volume of water being 33,000,000 gallons a day.* In addition to the Government bores there are 128 private ones, two of which discharge 4,000,000 gallons a day each. From state and private bores together 78,000,000 gallons is daily raised.† In Queensland there are 376 bores, with a daily yield of 214,000,000 gallons.‡

Altogether in the Commonwealth no less than 300,000,000 gallons of water is daily pumped to

* The depth at which water is reached much varies : the Pera bore, near Bourke, (300,000 gallons per diem), has a depth of 1154 feet ; Dolgelly, the deepest, (745,200 per diem), is 4086 feet.

† The average cost of a bore is nearly £3000, at 26s. a foot.

‡ Boring has been less successful in South Australia. Out of 87 bores only 33 were successful, the aggregate output being 4,500,000 gallons. In Western Australia there are 16 artesian wells, yielding together nearly 5,000,000 gallons.

the surface. It is clearly in this direction we must look for the chaining of the first of the lions in the path of Australian progress. The irrigation that has converted the district round the Pera bore from a desert to a rich farm-land, growing wheat, maize, tobacco, sugar-canes, pine-apples, and bananas, will one day convert many other Australian deserts into paradises,* and stave off death from many a starving flock. Confident of a steady supply from below, Australian pastoralists and agriculturalists will learn, as the artesian system extends, to be less and less dependent on uncertain bounties from above.†

The second lion has, like Trinculo, a forward and a backward voice. By the one he calls himself Cheap English Money, by the other, Debt. And in his backward aspect the monster is certainly at first sight somewhat terrible. The money borrowed by the six states of the Commonwealth, either in public or in private loans, is no less than £304,000,000; that is to say, that nearly £12,000,000 must be paid each year by Australia

* It is true, however, that in some districts,—Bourke, I believe among them,—the chemical properties of the subterranean water, after a few years, begin to affect prejudicially the vegetation it has caused.

† Little is heard nowadays of a project which was once much discussed in Australia, and may well come to the front again,—that of admitting the sea into the central Australian desert, and thus increasing the general humidity of the climate of the rest of Australia.

to creditors oversea.* During the years 1886-1890 no less than £47,000,000 was borrowed by the Australian states,—in population three and a half millions,—in addition to £53,000,000 received for investment on private account. Half this sum went to Victoria, which during this short period received an average of £51, per head, of borrowed money. What wonder at 'booming' trade and inflated land values; but what wonder also at the financial crash of 1893, involving in ruin many a deserving pioneer family, and temporarily shattering public confidence in Australia?

The memory of nations is short, and if we are to believe alarmist members of the opposition, Australia is again, through excessive borrowing, on the way to a financial crisis. The satisfactory state of Australian credit in England, improved by the federation of the provinces, enables each colony, it is said, to pay off the interest on old loans by raising new, while unscrupulous politicians remain in office by bribing the unemployed with excessive wages derived from the same source.

The Bottoms of the Australian press assure their readers that "there is not a more fearful wild-fowl living" than this lion; but a closer examination shews him to be old, toothless, and impotent.

In the first place, the borrowing of recent years

* Already the interest paid to investors exceeds by £40,000,000 the amount originally invested. Yet £104,000,000 of the principal yet remains due. The total debt of Australia to British investors is £82 8s. per inhabitant.

has been conducted with increased moderation.* During the four years ending 1899 the united loans, public and private, of the six states amounted only to £20,000,000; and whatever truth there may be in the charge that a certain portion of this borrowed money has been spent in making good deficiencies of revenue, it is certain that a large majority was used for the carrying on of directly revenue-producing works.† And as to the alleged over-payment of the unskilled labour of the 'unemployed,' the vehemence of the objection is partly due to the self-interested fear, on the part of employers, of a general rise of wages for all classes of labour, and a consequent fall in their own share of profits, —partly to the moribund 'wage-fund' superstition, and the belief that any 'interference' with the

* It is not, however, implied by the text that there is no room for further improvement.

† Since the beginning of borrowing down to the end of the financial year 1899-1900, £189,351,459 of loan money was expended. "Of these sums," says Mr. Coghlan, "£150,786,837, or considerably more than three-fourths, was spent by the Commonwealth colonies in the construction of railways, water-supply and sewerage work, and electric telegraphs, and the balance was expended on services which, though unproductive, were claimed by their proposers as being necessary in the interests of national developement." During the year 1899-1900 the Commonwealth states expended £6,122,227. "Of this amount," says the same high authority, "the sum of £3,970,069 was spent on services directly revenue-producing, and the remainder was chiefly devoted to works such as the construction of roads and bridges, the improvement of harbours and rivers, and the erection of lighthouses, schools, and public buildings,—less obviously a proper charge against loan votes." (*The Seven Colonies*, pp. 822, 823.)

semi-divine 'law' of supply and demand is intrinsically evil, and evil in its results. It may be that it will prove that Australia really cannot afford to pay a decent living wage (and from six to eight shillings a day for a married man is assuredly no more) to the unskilled labourers whom it employs on its public works. But, before it decides that this is so, the Commonwealth will be wise to consider whether there are no other means of retrenchment which do not involve the abolition of a fairly high national minimum wage and standard of comfort.*

The size, then, of the Australian debt, admittedly, in proportion to population, the largest in

* It is noteworthy that none of the lawyers and merchants who are so furiously certain that the community cannot afford to pay labourers the 8s. a day (or £125 a year) which Mr. O'Sullivan, Minister for Works in New South Wales, is aiming at, appear to entertain the smallest doubt that the community can afford to pay *them* the £8 or £80 a day (£2500 or £25,000 a year) for work which, after all, whatever it may be to the community, is more congenial to them than the labourer's, and *would be more congenial even if it were no more highly remunerated.* (This is not intended to imply the desirability of levelling down all incomes over £125 a year; though, undoubtedly, if present tendencies are unchecked, wealth in the future will be much more evenly distributed than it is now. So long as secondary education remains costly and in private hands, so long must those callings be more highly paid which involve a prolonged and expensive training. When, however, secondary education becomes, like primary, public, and free to all who shew themselves competent to profit by it, then it need be no longer necessary for the community to overpay any class to the extent of endangering the national minimum of comfort essential to the welfare of the race.)

the world, need not disturb us, (*a*) if we realize the gigantic territory in process of development and its immense natural resources; (*b*) if we recall the fact that out of the debt a railway system of thirteen thousand miles has been constructed at a cost of £122,000,000, with net earnings for the year of nearly £4,000,000;—railways run in the interests of the public, and the profits of which go, not to company promoters, directors, and shareholders, but to the community at large.

The third lion in the path is a many-headed beast, having as many faces as there are progressive peoples in the world. It has a fawning, smiling air; but there are sharp teeth behind every smile. And the name of the lion is Cheap Foreign Labour. Now, the monster is at present chained from the possibility of an attack on the Commonwealth: but the shackles are new, and may not be firmly set; and their removal would at once render Australia an easy prey.

In other words, it is only by some such protective tariff as that imposed by the first federal administration, that Australia can hope to maintain its present standard of living. It is quite useless to pay Australian craftsmen and labourers a fair wage, if at the same time we cease to purchase the results of their craft and labour, and prefer the pauper labour of the East. The existence of the teeming rice-fed millions of India and China is the gravest danger that threatens progressive nations;

and it is unavailing to shut out the cheap labourer (as even free-traders in Australia are willing to do) if we admit the commodities produced by his labour. Given a man's measure, the Japanese can send to Australia a suit equal to the best Melbourne tailor's, at less than a third of the cost. The Chinese can ship to Sydney eggs at threepence a dozen. Chinese furniture is half the price of Australian. The free-trader that would admit these commodities, as a sacrifice to his joss, the great god Cheap, must ultimately ruin his country's tailoring and furniture trades, and jeopardize its dairy industries. And these are only instances of a wide principle. There are probably very few Australian manufactured goods that could not be produced more cheaply if the manufacturers were to set up their factories in India or China, and export the finished article to a free-trade Australia. The East is not yet, indeed, fully awake to commercial ambition; nor has Eastern labour, as yet, the requisite skill or understanding of machinery. But this is but a matter of time, and a short time: it will not be long before Chinese factories, paying operatives a shilling a day, must ruin those of any free-trade country paying a fair day's wage.

It is a choice of alternatives. *Either the progressive world must recognize that its notion of a national minimum, a decent standard of life, a healthy and efficient race, is a chimera, and reduce all wages to their Oriental level; or else there must*

*be a protective league against the labour of the East.** It was reassuring of our economists to tell us that "highly priced labour is not as a rule dear labour," and the maxim will generally hold good of men of the same race: it will probably, for instance, be cheaper to get your book-case made by an Englishman at ten shillings than by one at eight shillings a day; but there would have to be an impossible difference in efficiency to make the labour of an Englishman at ten shillings as cheap as that of a Chinese at one shilling or an Indian at sixpence.

For the permanent disabling of this lion in the path, the friends of economic progress must look to a Customs Union between the nations that make up the British Empire,—an union not less desirable on political and social than on economic grounds. Towards such an union the Commonwealth has taken an important step in adopting a protective tariff. England has now but to abandon the rigid observance of free-trade doctrines in which but few really believe,† in order to bring

* The third possibility, the increase of Oriental wages to the European or Australian standard, seems to involve an impossible change in the Asiatic character.

† Since this was written, a first step has been taken by the English Government in its reimposition of corn duties,—let us hope the first nail in the coffin of an antiquated economic heresy. Until the progressive party in England has liberated itself from the toils of early Victorian economics, as well as from the bogs of Irish 'home rule,' it may be doubted whether it will ever regain its old power,—at any rate as long as Conservatives continue tolerating

herself into line with her colonies and with the rest of the progressive peoples of the world.

Meanwhile, so far as concerns Australia, the third lion has been seen to be chained. From its clutches the Commonwealth is safe, if only the chain be made sufficiently strong and lasting. That this will be so is the belief of all who have learned to admire and to rely upon the great good sense of the Australian people.

reform. It is thus as much the Conservatism of Liberals, as the Liberalism of Conservatives, that keeps the mother-country less progressive than her colonies. This, at least, is a natural colonial view of the matter.

CHAPTER XI

EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

Primary—Secondary—The Universities

EVERY state of the Commonwealth supplies primary education at all considerable centres of population, either free or at a nominal cost.* It is estimated that of children between the ages of six and fourteen, 80 per cent. attend the public primary schools. The enormous area of Australia, and its sparse settlement, place difficulties in the way of schooling in the back-blocks. Thus in 1899 the Education Department of New South Wales received applications for the opening of a school in one district where there were twenty-one children, and no school nearer than eleven miles; another, from a little place twenty-five miles from the nearest school, with twenty-six children desirous of attending. Both requests were declined, though in the latter case a 'half-time school' was offered. In all fifty-six applications had to be refused in New South Wales alone; and there can be no doubt

* In New South Wales threepence a week is charged, but may be excused on a plea of poverty being formally put in.

that in many of the remote country districts education would be non-existent, were it not for the bush tutor,—a being of whom it may be said that if it is well that education should come, woe to him by whom it comes: without money or prospects, he finds a social status not unlike that (if we are to believe Fielding and Macaulay) of the country parsons and chaplains of the Restoration Period,—differing from them in that he is worse fed, worse housed, and usually devoid even of the consolations of religion.

Wherever population is held to warrant the expenditure, a school of some sort is erected, and teaching of some sort is supplied. The public schools of New South Wales are 2909 in number; of Victoria, 1892; South Australia, 690; Queensland, 911; Tasmania, 319; and West Australia, 218; the number of children in average attendance varying from about 150,000 in New South Wales to about 15,000 in West Australia.*

Neither the remuneration nor the attainments of teachers are as a rule high;† many of them

* These figures, and those given throughout this chapter, are the latest procurable in Sydney at time of writing (October, 1901). Some are for 1900, the rest for 1899; but the difference between the figures for two consecutive years would not be large.

† Of the Victorian teachers, who are probably the most efficient in Australia, one of their inspectors writes: "Our Victorian teachers, for natural intelligence and capacity for work, are second to none, and within our examination limits do very good work; but our pupil-teacher system, our examination methods, and most of all, the fact that salaries fluctuate with the percentage

being disgracefully paid, and, even so, paid often, it is to be feared, far more than they are worth. Comparatively few go through the universities;* the majority pass from scholar to pupil teacher and from pupil teacher to teacher without receiving any training, or, in fact, any education worthy of the name.

It need hardly be said that among Australian primary school teachers are some of sterling worth, rich alike in moral and intellectual endowment. It is to be regretted that the states have not, as yet, either allowed such men and women the means of developement to their fullest efficiency, or paid them sufficiently highly to encourage the others.

The subjects taught comprise the 'three r's,' grammar, geography, history (both English and Australian), drill, music, needlework, etc. Out of some 10,800 children in the Goulburn district of obtained, are responsible for the narrow educational horizon which surrounds so many of them" (*Education Report*, Victoria, 1900, p. 59).

* Professor Anderson, of Sydney University, states that in 1901 only three training college students were attending lectures at the university. "The department," he says, "has virtually declared that it is unwilling or unable to allow its future teachers to enjoy the benefits of university education." (*The Public School System of New South Wales*, by F. ANDERSON, M.A., Professor of Logic and Mental Philosophy in the University of Sydney. Angus and Robertson, 1901.) In regard to the teaching of teachers, all the states are not so bad as New South Wales. South Australia, as befits a settlement of Wakefield's, enjoys a noble pre-eminence in this matter.

New South Wales, 10,700 were examined in arithmetic, 4500 in grammar and in geography, 4585 in English history, 1010 in Australian history, 9898 in music, 129 in Latin, 76 in French, while practically the whole 10,800 underwent drill, object lessons, scripture,* and drawing. Out of 164,000 children examined in New South Wales in 1899, 157,000 were examined in scripture, 156,000 in drawing, 149,000 in music, 8903 in natural science, and 2138 in Latin.†

The number of primary school teachers of all classes employed in New South Wales in 1899 was 4884, pupil teachers included. If we divide the gross enrolment of 265,000 by this number, we arrive at an average of 52 children to each teacher. But when we remember that in many of the country schools the attendance is small, we realize that, as in England, the large schools are enormously understaffed,‡ and that classes of over

* The religious difficulty is differently met in different states. Arrangements are made by which clergy of the various denominations hold classes in the public schools out of regular school hours. In addition to this, in some states, select passages of scripture and moral lessons are read in school hours by the regular staff.

† In addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the above-mentioned subjects, the curriculum also extends in the 'superior public schools' (253) to euclid, algebra, mensuration, and trigonometry.

‡ "All our schools," says Professor Anderson, "are understaffed." This evil is admitted by the more candid of the inspectors, whose reports, at any rate in Victoria, South Australia, and West Australia, shew that they are animated by high educational ideals. Thus Mr. A. W. Garrett, one of the Tasmanian

seventy are by no means uncommon,—often under the charge of a mere child.*

What hope of individual attention, what hope of the personal knowledge that is the soul of teaching, under this barrack system? Can we expect any real knowledge, except of drill and of mechanical arithmetic, of unintelligent reading and unintelligible writing? The ablest and best of teachers may well be rendered hopeless by the impossibility of their task.

Any efficient system of public instruction would involve halving the size of classes and doubling the remuneration of teachers. As this means a quadrupled expenditure, and as the expenditure is already as high† as public opinion in Australia thinks fit, it is clear we are as far from efficient primary education in Australia as we are in England.

inspectors of schools, observes in his report affixed to the Education Report of 1900: "Geography and history are generally well taught in well-staffed schools. *It would be unreasonable to look for much in a school where a teacher has five or six classes to teach single-handed.*" It is not implied that Australian primary schools are inferior to English in this respect, or in others criticized in this chapter. In some respects in education, as in so much else, Australia sets an example to England. In understaffing both are equally guilty.

* "It is a shame and a disgrace," says Professor Anderson, "that a girl in her early teens, unformed in body and mind, should have, as is often the case, to undertake the charge of classes of fifty, sixty, seventy, and, I believe, even eighty pupils."

† If we reckon on the basis of average attendance, the annual cost of primary education in Australia would be something over £4 a child. This sum includes the cost of school buildings.

Far be it from me to undervalue the good work already being done in Australia towards primary education. I admit to the full the existence in the more fortunate centres of large and well-ventilated (if appallingly ugly) buildings ; * of many hard-working and successful teachers, worthy of a better fate. I rejoice to think, as all who love Australia and the Empire must needs rejoice to think, that practically the whole child population of the Commonwealth is daily learning discipline, † drill, and arithmetic, in generally healthy surroundings. But that Australia has done so much is the very reason for hoping that she will do much more. All is now ready for education. How long before the education will begin?

It is primarily a matter of cost. To say that Australia cannot afford it is absurd. Cannot afford to make the most profitable of all investments ! ‡

* In the country districts a wooden shanty has often to serve. The general inspector for Queensland (*Education Report*, 1900, Appendix A) has to complain of schools so overcrowded that children have to be taught "on verandahs, in play-sheds, in shady places, or round the corners."

† Enforced too often by the excessive use of the strap, a punishment which in some districts is so common as to defeat its own object and become not a means of disgrace, but a test of endurance ; —a kind of school sport, inferior to football only in that it is played within doors. It is pleasant to notice in the report for the north-eastern district of South Australia: "Corporal punishment is rarely inflicted in any school. In the majority of schools it is never resorted to." *O si sic omnes!*

‡ The foremost of modern English economists, Professor

Rather she cannot afford not to! It is only by improved education that the British dominions can hope to hold their own in the markets of the world. Mr. Sidney Webb has reminded England that it is in the class-rooms of her primary schools that the battles of the Empire for commercial prosperity are being already lost.*

The saying is no whit less true of Australia, which, worthy of all praise as have been her efforts to secure primary education for her far-scattered children, has now to face the harder task of rendering that education efficient, not here and there in favoured districts, but throughout the Commonwealth.

There are not wanting signs that Australians are beginning to be conscious of the need for improvement in their much-vaunted education system. The Victorian education reports are rich in good suggestions, some of which are already bearing fruit. Thus a trained kindergarten mistress has been brought out from England to Melbourne, where she is to teach, to lecture, and gradually gather round her a competent staff with a view to revolutionizing Victorian infant education by kindergarten methods.

Western Australia has departed from the

Marshall, states that *on purely economic grounds* no expenditure is more justifiable than that devoted to an increase of efficiency in a country's primary schools.

* *Nineteenth Century*, September, 1901.

calamitous custom of appointing as inspectors only those who have passed through the sterilizing routine,—pupil teacher, assistant teacher, head teacher, inspector,—and has appointed Mr. Cyril Jackson, of Toynbee Hall, as chief inspector of her schools. Mr. Jackson has had a free hand, and the colony is already enjoying the results. In four years the number of children attending the public schools has doubled. Instead of making the promotion of pupils depend entirely on their examination by inspectors, Mr. Jackson allows teachers who have received good reports in the previous year to conduct examinations for promotion themselves. Realizing that the wretched rate of pay obtaining in the teaching profession is a chief cause of the difficulty in securing able men for teachers, Mr. Jackson has already succeeded in raising the average salary of head teachers and assistants from £121, 7s. 4d. to £131 18s. 9d.; and this he looks on as only the beginning of a general levelling-up of salaries and attainments.* Highly paid labour, our economists tell us, is not, as a rule, dear labour, because of its greater efficiency. And if there is any one matter more than another in which a country cannot afford cheap and

* I should like to add a brief note of admiration on the excellent 'model' primary school that I had the pleasure of visiting at Perth. The large, airy, well-appointed schoolrooms, the firm but gentle discipline of the teachers, the sunny, happy faces of the well-fed, well-dressed children, form one of my pleasantest Australian memories.

inefficient labour, it is surely in the education of her future citizens.

But Victoria and West Australia are not alone in their desires for reform. Even New South Wales, in some respects the most lethargic of the states, is beginning to bestir herself; and the present Minister for Education promises several important reforms. It need not be doubted that if Australians suffer themselves to be convinced that the public school system should be rendered efficient, the state parliaments will raise no objection, while the inspectors and the teachers will hail the breaking of fetters which have so long restrained them from realizing the possibilities of their high vocation.

Those who have learned to respect Australians for their common sense and business aptitudes, will not despair of seeing in the immediate future a drastic reform of the public primary education of the Commonwealth.*

Secondary Education

None of the Commonwealth states has, as is the case in New Zealand, an efficient system of

* Such reform would doubtless be easier if education had been handed over by the Constitution to the Federal Government. The National Parliament might well have numbered among its highest functions the control, through an Education Board, of the national education. This, perhaps, by an alteration in the Constitution, may come in time. Meanwhile, the author has ventured to suggest one immediate reform that might well be adopted. (Vide Appendix II.)

secondary education subsidized, and indirectly controlled, by the state. On the contrary, the anarchic conditions obtaining in England are even more mischievous in Australia, where they are not modified by the existence of historic schools whose traditions keep them true to themselves, if not invariably, perhaps, to the highest interests of their country. In the Australian states there is nothing to prevent a man who has failed as an auctioneer or a pork-butcher from removing to a suitable township and conducting a second-rate secondary school, which he calls the Blankville Grammar School, if that name is as yet unappropriated, or, if it is, the Australasian College, or Commonwealth Collegiate School, Blankville. No doubt, if he is preternaturally ignorant or brutal, he will be found out in time; but at the cost of how many wasted boyhoods! If, on the other hand, his inefficiency does not sink to the point of scandal,—if, too, he be sufficiently master of the ‘art of pay’ to secure the services of assistants somewhat less incompetent, his school will probably from the business point of view succeed, while from every other point of view it will be a more disastrous failure than if it had failed. Nothing is more wanted in Australia,—not even the drastic reform of the primary schools,—than the appointment of a Board of Secondary Education in every state, the registration under such Boards of satisfactory teachers and duly qualified schools, and

the legal prohibition of all other schools and all other teachers.

An educational quack is at least as hurtful to the body politic as is his medical confrère, and should be put down quite as rigorously in the interests of the community.

Even under the present system, or lack of system, there are not wanting in Australia several good secondary schools, some few of which receive state aid. The Sydney Grammar School, which has the reputation of being one of the best-conducted schools in Australia, receives an annual grant from the Government of New South Wales.* Its staff is, to a considerable extent, composed of graduates of English universities. It affords an education similar to that of a London or Manchester day school to some six hundred boys. There are also good schools in connexion with the Anglican and Wesleyan denominations (the Church of England Grammar School and Newington College), while the King's School, Parramatta, does something to maintain the traditions of an English public school.† Similarly, Victoria has its Church of England Grammar School and Scots' College, its Geelong Grammar School, etc. Queensland has

* In 1899 the state grant was £1500. School fees amounted to £8562 10s.

† There is also a state High School for boys and one for girls. It may be remarked that, although there are one or two good schools, the provision for girls' secondary education is much inferior in Australia to that in England or New Zealand.

several grammar schools receiving annual grants from the Government and distinguishing themselves at Sydney University school-examinations. Adelaide is well served ; and Perth has its grammar school endowed by the state.

Good as is the work being done by these schools and some others, it is idle to deny that the existence of the inefficient private school is a menace to the secondary education of the Commonwealth.*

The Universities

The six states of the Commonwealth have four universities between them, Queensland and West Australia being the only two states which are as yet without properly qualified teaching and examining bodies. These universities, especially the University of Sydney, have been well endowed by private benefactors, and are also the recipients of liberal annual grants from the state parliaments.† It must be admitted by their best friends that the Australian universities have not done, and are not doing, what was expected of them. The number of

* This does not mean, of course, that there are no good private schools in Australia,—to the writer's personal knowledge there are several,—but only that these bear a lamentably small proportion to the whole number. Efficient private schools would welcome any such scheme of Government registration as that proposed above.

† The Government grant to Sydney University for 1899-1900 was £11,266 ; its total income for the year £34,466.

students attending them is relatively small,* and they are without any considerable influence on the main currents of colonial life. The collegiate communism, which is the essential part of the English university system, leads but an attenuated existence in Australia. There are, indeed, residential colleges attached to each of the universities;† but they are small, and, even so, seldom full,—the majority of the students who do not live at home preferring the freer and cheaper life of the lodging-house.

The teaching staffs are, as a rule, highly competent; many of the abler English university honour-men being attracted by the high salaries and extended field of usefulness afforded by the young universities of this giant land. But it has been the ill-fortune of Australia that the professors have almost invariably been men of the quiet student type, who have confined their work rigorously to their lecture-rooms, and have failed to see that the successful university professor in a

* The number of students attending lectures at Sydney University for the year 1899-1900 was 519, comprising 482 matriculated, 37 unmatriculated students, and 70 women. Sydney insists on attendance at lectures as a condition precedent to a degree; Melbourne does not.

† Thus Sydney has its St. Paul's College (Anglican), St. Andrew's (Presbyterian), and St. John's (Roman Catholic), besides a Women's College, the average numbers at each being from fifteen to thirty. Although of untidy surroundings and ill-kept gardens, they are comely and comfortable buildings. This is especially true of St. Paul's, a charmingly designed miniature college in Early English style.

youthful democratic country must be something of a demagogue, and do something to justify the ways of universities to men in the street. We want an occasional Sir George Grey on the staffs of our colonial colleges; some professor who, while not neglecting the duties of the lecture-room and the examination-hall, will yet be able to catch and hold the ear of the public, and make the university felt as a living factor in the common life.

Nothing could be further from the intention of the writer than to decry the Australian universities. On the contrary, all honour to these young communities, inasmuch as in their struggle for material wealth they have spared time and money to devise and to endow halls of learning not in some respects unworthy of comparison with the storied quadrangles of older lands. If they did no more than 'mark time,' the Australian universities would yet be doing something for the future of education in the Commonwealth. They are doing much more than mark time; they are all of them carrying on useful instructional work, and turning out annually increasing numbers of intelligent students, competent to take a worthy part in the organized existence of the state.

But the warmest admiration for the quality of the work done, in the face of many difficulties, by the universities of the Commonwealth, is quite compatible with grave regret that their sphere of

influence is not more extended;* and especially that they are not brought directly into touch with the public primary schools, both by educating, without exception, all those who are to teach at those schools; and by opening their doors to every primary school pupil (after a free secondary school course), from whose full developement the community is likely to benefit.

* The University Extension movement has done some good work, especially in Victoria. In New South Wales it is now, it would seem, at a standstill. The result is that while the small colony of New Zealand has four teaching university colleges, one at each of the chief population centres, the huge state of New South Wales has its one centralized university at Sydney, and, outside Sydney, derives practically no benefit from its existence. This defect will no doubt right itself, as population grows, by the institution of affiliated colleges; but meanwhile something might surely be done for the country districts.

CHAPTER XII

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CHARACTER *

AUSTRALIANS have hitherto shewn themselves somewhat sensitive to external criticism. They have the more excuse for this foible of youth through the unfriendly or the offensively patronizing tone that has often been adopted by such criticism, and the failure of the general public to make sufficient allowance for the personal prejudices of the critics.

With none is this more necessary than with Marcus Clarke, who, for all his years in Australia, remained an Englishman, and an Englishman of a fastidious hypochondriac temperament. His frequently quoted essays on Australian scenery (prefixed to the edition of Gordon's poems) and on the "Future Australian Race" must not be allowed, for their brilliancy of style, to usurp an authority unwarranted by the facts.

"The Australian mountain-forests," he tells us, "are funereal, secrèt, stern. Their solitude is desolation. They seem to stifle in their black gorges a story of sullen despair. No tender sentiment is nourished in their shade. In other lands

* This chapter is partly based on an article contributed to the *Nineteenth Century* for September, 1902.

the dying year is mourned ; the falling leaves drop lightly on his bier. In the Australian forests no leaves fall. The savage winds shout among the rock clefts. From the melancholy gums, strips of white bark hang and rustle. The very animal life of these frowning hills is either grotesque or ghostly. Great grey kangaroos hop noiselessly over the coarse grass. Flights of white cockatoos stream out, shrieking like evil souls. The sun suddenly sinks, and the mopokes burst out into terrible yells of semi-human laughter. . . . All is fear-inspiring and gloomy."

This is impressive writing ; but the impression conveyed is radically false. To the normal Australian the gum is not "melancholy," but the most beautiful tree in the world. To him there is nothing in the least "grotesque" or "ghostly" about a kangaroo ; and the mountains, far from raising in his soul, as Clarke goes on to say, a "sentiment of defiant ferocity," soothe him with their exquisite harmonies of gold and indigo. A "fantastic land of monstrosities" Australia certainly is not to the normal Australian.

Taking this gloomy view of Australian nature, Clarke was no less pessimistic as to the beginnings of national character. "In another hundred years," we learn, "the average Australian will be a tall, coarse, strong-jawed, greedy, pushing, talented, man, excelling in swimming and horsemanship. His religion will be a form of Presbyterianism ;

his national policy a democracy tempered by the rate of exchange. . . .

"His wife will be a thin, narrow woman, very fond of dress and idleness, caring little for her children ; but without sufficient brain-power to sin with zest. . . .

"In five hundred years, the breed, unless recruited from foreign nations, will be wholly extinct."

A quarter of a century has passed since this prophecy was written, and the words retain their sting. But a more singularly unjust summary of national characteristics could hardly be conceived.

The root of Clarke's error, an error continually re-echoed by writers in England on Australian themes, seems in both cases to have been the same, an inability to separate the normal from the abnormal, the temporary from the relatively permanent.

Australian scenery has certainly, to unaccustomed English eyes, an air of strangeness, and even perhaps, in its monotony, of sadness. On the other hand, to Australian eyes, used to cloudless heavens, snowless winters, boughs never bare of their leaves, I can well imagine that nothing would seem more melancholy than an English winter among London fogs, Yorkshire moors, or the bleak desolation of the fens. For them the annual tragedy of autumn may well outweigh the annual resurrection-miracle of spring ;

and the glory of a few fine summer days may seem dearly bought by months of dismal cold and sunlessness.

But even such aspects of Australian scenery, as may with some truth be called melancholy or grotesque, are neither normal nor likely to be permanent.

Australian scenery, as an effective character-formative, must be understood to mean the scenery among which the bulk of the people live. No one will maintain that the vast waterless, treeless deserts of the interior are cheerful places to live in. But then only a small proportion of the population, attempts to live in them. In the settled districts, year after year the more repellent aspects of the aboriginal landscape change to smiling cornfields and vineyards. True that the process involves periods of unsightliness; but it would be as unfair to judge the permanent possibilities of Australian scenery by the forests of ring-barked trees that are the precursors of civilization, as it would have been to judge the future of the pastoral loveliness of this garden-island of England from the swamps and gloomy forests that Cæsar found among the fogs. For if scenery has its influence in forming the character of man, man has for his part no small share in forming the character of natural scenery.

Already the eastern coastlands are transformed beyond the possibility of recognition by Cook's

aboriginals, could we imagine any of them restored to life. A hundred years hence, in the settled districts, there will be little indeed left of what of the ghostly or grotesque may legitimately be discerned in the aboriginal bush scenery: the scrub will have given place to agriculture or pasturage, kangaroos will have been banished further and further inland before advancing flocks and herds of sheep and kine: English trees, English fruits, English grasses will clothe the land anew: only the cloudless blue of the skies, the warmth of the sun, and dryness of the atmosphere will remain distinctively Australian.

So, too, with the aspects of the Australian character which Clarke noticed, or thought he noticed, thirty years ago. Partly they are explained by Clarke's own unfortunate experience of the class of men the shiftless author had reasons for knowing at their worst,—the Melbourne money-lenders. It is ruinously easy to misjudge human nature from a few sorry specimens; ruinously easy for a young man emigrating to the colonies to make them chargeable for the subsequent depredations of middle age upon the ideals of youth. But to a large degree Clarke's misjudgment was due to his failure to realize the evanescent nature of many of the qualities which he attributed to the Australian character as such.

Individuals, "coarse, strong-jawed, greedy," exist, no doubt, among Australians, as among

other branches of the English race. They may have conceivably existed in larger proportion in the Melbourne of Clarke and Gordon's day. But characters are changed by circumstance. It has taken but a couple of generations to transform the rough-and-ready tent-villages of Ballarat and Bendigo, receptacles of half the desperadoes and ne'er-do-wells of Europe, into as pleasant, law-abiding, and self-respecting townships as are to be found in any English colony. Who knows what little bush-villages are not fated to be tomorrow's Manchesters; and who shall judge the future character of the Australian people from the picturesquely uncouth ways of a few boundary-riders driven half mad by the isolation of their lot?

If we are to form any fair idea of the character of the Australian people, we must judge them as a whole as we find them in their towns and settled country districts; we must realize the hardship of the struggle with nature on the part of the pioneer; but we must not make the mistake of judging Australians,—increasingly a manufacturing and agricultural people,—entirely from the wildest type of pastoral life in the wildest parts of the bush.

And such judgment as we make must be made in the most general terms, and subject to the admission that changing conditions must needs bring unexpected changes.

The present writer feels that his knowledge is but partial, and that his conclusions must not be

accepted as incontrovertible; but he also feels that to omit to record any conclusions, on the score of causing possible offence, would be to do his duty neither to his readers nor to Australia. As one who had the privilege of being present at those Inaugural celebrations of January, 1901, who saw the Harbour gemmed with a million lights, and watched the first Australian Governor-General make his triumphal progress through flowers and flags, by seas of cheering faces, to the great ceremonial in the Centennial Park, he feels that it would be derogatory to the self-respect of the New Nation that it should be assumed that she is not prepared to meet fair criticism fairly. That was no christening festival in honour of which Sydney flashed forth into paradise, and every street was changed to a garden of Eden: it was rather the celebration of the coming of age of the six stalwart colonies that had lived to become a nation.

Since, with the exception of a few German and Italian immigrants, a handful of Chinese and French, and the rapidly decreasing tribes of aborigines, the population of Australia is almost exclusively Anglic in origin, it is to other than racial influences we must attribute the *differentia* of the Australian character.

Among such influences climate must needs hold an important place. An Englishman in Australia, however much he may try, cannot resist

the influence of almost continual sunlight and summer.

The fog and frost of English manners are here unknown, or known only to an invidious few, who compound for lack of the kernel of English social distinction by sedulously imitating the husk, and sell their free Australian birthright for Paris fripperies or the latest insolence of London 'smart' society. The normal Australian is as free from shyness or reserve, hypocrisy or dissimulation, as is the sunny bush among which he lives. There is a frankness in his speech concerning his aims and actions which is by no means without its charm to those weary of old-world affectations and make-believes.

This quality is, of course, likely to pass in occasional instances into the 'blow' of which Mr. Trollope wrote; but it would be a mistake to imagine it to be an universal, or even a general, Australian characteristic. When the extreme isolation of the Commonwealth is considered, and the consequent impossibility, under present conditions, for any very large proportion of Australians to visit other and older lands, it is rather the intellectual modesty of the majority of colonials that seems to call for comment.

It is perhaps more to an untravelled, and unfounded, distrust of the capacity of their own land and their own people, than to any abnormal share of self-conceit, that we may attribute that

colonial sensitiveness to criticism which has above been noted,—a sensitiveness shared by all young nations.

The lack of reserve, of subtlety, in Australian scenery has impressed most English visitors. It is not, of course, that there are no half-tones,—one of the three prevailing colours being the subdued olive of the endless gums ; but that there is little *variety* of colour, no subtle harmonies of a thousand half-seen hues that compensate for dearth of sunshine in the English landscape. There is perhaps a similar dearth of varied half-tones in the Australian character. Life in the Commonwealth runs upon comparatively simple lines ; and there is too much eternal sunlight, too little lack of shade, for mystery or doubt.

We may see another effect of the sunshine in the easy good-humour that is a marked Australian characteristic. Good-humour is perhaps to be expected of the descendants of those whose home was once called 'merry England.' It might have been anticipated that the Englishman in Australia would prove, like Sophocles in Elysium,

εὐκολος μὲν ἔνθα, εὐκολος δ' ἐκεῖ.

But the climate has certainly here accentuated existing tendencies. Bad temper is a very rare colonial weakness: the demeanour of Australians to each other and to strangers being marked by a careless *bonhomie*, natural enough in a new land

where there is plenty of sun and plenty of room for all.

But it must not be supposed that good-humour degenerates to a weakness, or that it connotes any lack of grit or resolution of character. It has been claimed as a formative influence of character peculiar to Canada among English colonies, that the rigour of the winter climate precludes the immigration of any colonists who are without the necessary industry and determination to make themselves homes to keep them safe from the bitterness of ice and snow. In Australia, where one may sleep in the open air throughout the year without serious discomfort, it is perhaps too readily supposed that stern formative influences of character are lacking. The truth is that heat has trials in its train at least as severe as those of cold. It takes energy, 'character,' resolution enough to do one's work with a temperature at 110°. The horrors of Australian droughts supply a test of grit and determination, energy and hope, strenuous enough to satisfy the most exacting moralist.

An instance has already been quoted of an Australian who in one generation had seen his herds twice rise to 30,000; twice, in literal truth, decimated by the drought. Slow tragedies like these, months of unrewarded waiting, harvests of ruined hopes, suffice to build the background of the Australian character with as stern a stuff as ever kept Canadian winter from 'weans and wife.'

Lack of resolution or of energy was never charged against Australian contingents in South Africa. Lack of respect for command, as such, divorced from the personal qualities that command respect; remissness in unessential trifles of routine; a certain callousness to the suffering they helped to cause;—these comprise the sum-total of the defects of the Australian soldier in the eyes of those who learned to know him best. His alertness, his power of turning unexpected circumstances to his own advantage, his pluck, and his endurance, were generously admitted by English officers.

From other standpoints than those of a military officer, Australians have been from time to time criticised for intemperance, for gambling, and for a lack of reverence.

With regard to the first point, Englishmen in England can certainly not afford to cast stones. Although, no doubt, especially in country townships in the hotter portions of the continent, a great deal of excessive drinking goes on, the Australian people as a whole are very much more temperate than most European nations.*

* The figures given for the latest available years by Mulhall and Coghlan (*Seven Colonies*, pp. 371 and 417) respectively are—

United Kingdom ...	3'57	} gallons of proof alcohol consumed per caput per annum.
France ...	5'10	
Germany ...	3'08	
Australia ...	2'74	

Tea is the almost universal drink at meals, a peculiar quality of the Australian climate rendering the quaint combination of what would elsewhere be thought excessive meat-consumption and excessive tea-consumption apparently innocuous.

There can be no doubt about the Australian propensity to gamble. There are few things about which a colonial will not bet. Everybody who aspires to be anybody invariably goes to the races, and almost invariably 'puts' enough 'on' a horse not to allow his interest in any event to degenerate into a mere admiration of equine prowess. Those who cannot afford the luxury of Flemington or Randwick read the long columns of description of the dresses of the ladies who paraded the lawn; or if of the other sex, may secure an interest in the day's proceedings by a visit to one of the numerous betting-shops, or an investment of five or ten shillings in one of the large inter-colonial sweepstakes on each event. *

Those who on moral grounds most heartily condemn such appeals to Fortune, must at least admit the apparent necessity of some little

* The first Australian Federal Government has had to make itself unpopular, as any first Federal Government must needs have done, by several necessary but unpopular steps. None has been more unpopular than the refusal of the Federal Postmaster-General to allow the now federalized postal service to be used for the transmission of money orders and tickets, to, and from, "Tattersall's,"—a vast sweepstake agency by means of which, for many years, thousands of pounds have been redistributed every month.

occasional excitement to reconcile the average man to the monotony of humdrum toil, and the lesson thus learnt of taking with equal mind the changes and chances of life.

As to irreverence,—it is surely not unnatural that the citizens of the New Nation, reared beneath no shadow of ancient shrines, devoid of household gods, should refuse their reverence to aught to which they do not think it due.

Thus an English visitor, be he lecturer, divine, or cricketer, has no reverence as such.* If during his sojourn in Australia he prove himself, in eyes Australian, a man of mark, he will find generous treatment in the Commonwealth. Otherwise no amount of English or continental eulogy will

* I remember an amusing instance of a fuddled Australian's sentiment of 'Australia for the Australians,' during Mark Twain's last lectures in Australia. A young clerk sat near me, and exploded in merriment at every familiar jest. But next to him on the other side sat a dissentient spirit, grunting disapproval at every grin. At last he broke forth in disapproval. "What are yer larfin at?" he grumbled; "if that man 'ad been a young Australian, no one would have paid sixpence to hear him!"

An earlier visitor, the late Mr. Haweis, found his lectures on music but poorly attended. On preaching, however, at a fashionable Sydney church, he was honoured with an overflowing congregation. "Aha," was the unconventional opening of his sermon, "I thought you would come to hear me when there was nothing to pay for it!"

It is to be feared that neither Dr. W. G. Grace's nor Ranjitsinhji's experiences of Australian crowds has been altogether fortunate; but both would probably now admit that some natural indiscretions on their part rendered a certain amount of ill-feeling not less natural.

prevent the Australian public, no respecter of persons, from summarily removing the idol from the pedestal.

If by the general charge of irreverence is meant that the Australians are an irreligious people, a confident denial must be made. The critic of the impressionist school would base a hostile judgment on the sight of Sydney Harbour on a Sunday afternoon. But it must not be forgotten that in Australia church-going during a large part of the year is rendered by heat and flies and mosquitoes a very considerable act of endurance. Moreover, no town in England is called upon to resist such temptations as are offered by the waters of Sydney Harbour. On the whole, the number of churches in proportion to population, and of average attendance at the churches, is higher than that in England.

The absence of any ecclesiastical Establishment has not prevented the Church of England from being the most influential and largest of the denominations, but it has prevented it from plausibly arrogating to itself any great social superiority. Every sacred building, Roman Catholic or Wesleyan, Anglican or Congregational, is called indiscriminately a 'church,' and there is much less fixity in the lines of demarcation than is the case in England. A good Anglican preacher will attract Wesleyans, an able Congregational minister Anglicans, and so forth. Ministers of the different

denominations are found acting together in a way impossible in the old land. Thus it was largely through the action of the Council of the Churches in Sydney,—a permanent deliberative body composed of the Anglican archbishop and several prominent Free-church divines,—that the words “humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God” were added to the preamble of the Federal Constitution Act, while it was decided to open each Federal sitting with prayers. On the whole it may be said that while the number of orthodox believers in any form of Christianity is, no doubt, as in other parts of the Empire, but a small proportion of the population, yet these exert an amount of influence to which their numbers do not entitle them,—respect for other people’s religious views being a marked characteristic of the Commonwealth. That influence would be still greater were it not for the fact that the absence of adequate remuneration, either in stipend or social esteem, keeps the general standard of clerical ability beneath that in England. Morally, it would be hard to find a finer set of men than the bulk of Australian clergy; mentally, with an occasional exception, they are quite incapable of the task before them. With the ‘years which bring,’ to nations as to individuals, ‘the philosophic mind,’ we may expect the Commonwealth to rise to the height of its great opportunities, and contribute its quota

to the religion, the philosophy, the general culture of the world.

Meanwhile it is in the successful struggle with natural conditions, in the applications of practical knowledge to life, in the working solutions of social difficulties, that Australians are winning fame for the New Nation, and storing up a welfare fairer than fame for the time to come. In mechanical progress Australians are already far ahead of older nations who have had to pay their penalty as pioneers of progress. The Commonwealthman, on his first visit to London, for instance, is amazed at means of locomotion inferior to those of many a fourth-rate Australian township. That men whose time is worth, presumably, more than that of most Australians, should content themselves with crawling through teeming alleys, constantly barred from further progress by the finger of the policeman; the spectacle of London omnibuses lumbering on their painful course, crowded within and without, while unsuccessful would-be customers stand patiently waiting on the pavements; the dismal Stygian windings of the underground;—all this, in the wealthiest city in the world, amazes the Australian, familiar with the orderly, all-penetrating cable-tramways of Melbourne, or with the rapid comfort of Sydney electric cars.

The Sydney-sider, coming into his city from harbour-suburb or outlying railway township,

in either case finds a comfortable electric tram in waiting, ready for the sum of one penny to convey him and any reasonable baggage to the centre of the city. The slowness of London travelling; the difficulties and expense of passing from one terminus to another, and from any terminus to anywhere else; the fact that so rich a nation endures all this without a murmur, and receives the metropolitan tube railways rather as an unexpected grace from Heaven than as a tardy necessity to life in London, are met by the travelling Australian with a wonder not, it is feared, always unmixed with contempt. So used is he to the railways and tramways of his own country, existing solely for the good of the country, and shaping their conduct entirely in accordance with the general convenience, that the very idea of English railway systems, whose main object is to endeavour to pay each a dividend to its shareholders at the expense of the public,—preferably by ruining a rival system,—is to him scarcely conceivable. The marvel of the average colonial in London, expressed with characteristic frankness, is that such a mass of unnecessary expense and trouble can be suffered in silence by millions of uncomplaining citizens.

On all the comforts of convenience the Australian has learned to insist: rapid and comfortable locomotion, the latest labour-saving appliances, are as much matters of course to him as unlimited

meat and unlimited tea, or equal political rights. He orders his dinner and makes his appointments by telephone,—a necessity even in the humblest middle-class households; he goes to work on sumptuous electric trams; he cooks by the latest stoves, writes by typewriter, and plays by pianola.

That Australians are in the van in mechanical progress is not, of course, entirely due to their native energy and grit of character. Circumstances of time are here as potent as circumstances of place. The last child of a family is usually the best educated; and Australians have benefited at the expense of other peoples from what have above been called "the penalties of the pioneer." If the problem of London locomotion were now for the first time to be worked out, and we had not to build on our dead failures, Londoners would soon have no reason to be twitted by their more fortunate fellow-countrymen in Adelaide, Sydney, or Melbourne. It is the necessity of consulting vested interests at every turn that clogs all English progress, social and political.

Elsewhere I have insisted on the fact that we must not suppose English social distinctions not to exist in the colonies, and I have commented on the ill-feeling subsisting in Australia between the classes and the masses. But no student of Commonwealth institutions can deny that there is a kind of social equality in Australia to which England is as yet a stranger. In England it is the more

progressive of the 'upper classes' that talk social equality; in Australia it is the whole of the working class that believes in it, and acts on its belief.

In Australia the circumstances which have led to manhood (and now to adult) suffrage, have contributed to cause a feeling of independence in every individual which we know little of in England, where a weary experience of ages has taught the poor to connive at their poverty, and respect the rich for keeping them in their place. In the Commonwealth no one knows the "station in life to which it has pleased God to call him" until he has put it to the test of experience. 'Board-school boy to university don' is in England a transition we salute with the attention of a nine-days' wonder. In Australia every Board-school boy (or Public-school boy, as he prefers to call himself,—in Australia the 'Public school' and the 'Board school' are identical) thinks himself fit to be professor or premier, as the case may be; and knows he will be, if he can prove his fitness.

While in England high official place can hardly be obtained by merit apart from advantages of birth or wealth, in Australia real capacity in any field is almost sure of a reward. While in the old land preferment in every branch of service goes less by capacity than influence; while we are governed by one clique, taught by another, and ministered to by a third; in Australia political or any other power (though not, as has been

already said, social acceptance) is accessible to merit, wherever found.

For this freedom from the 'influence' now sapping efficiency in every branch of English life, Australians have largely to thank the youth of their country; largely, too, the necessary admixture of their population. Where in one street, living side by side, we have representatives of a hundred towns and villages in England and Scotland, Ireland and Wales, it is inevitable that local peculiarities, traditions, and narrownesses, should be worn away, and that men should think less of the past, more of the present and future; less of men's families and more of themselves. Nothing strikes an Englishman more on revisiting England, after some years of colonial life, than the iron sway of custom and convention in every department of old-world society. In England the true rulers seem not the living, but the dead: she thinks herself a democracy, calls herself an aristocracy, and is a necrocracy.

"This," wrote Francis Adams of Australia, "is a true republic,—the truest, as I take it, in the world. In England the average man feels he is an inferior, in America he feels that he is a superior; in Australia he feels that he is an equal. . . . Here the people is neither servile nor insolent, but only shews its respect of itself by its respect of others." *

* *Australian Essays*. Melbourne, 1886.

From this republic,—the nearest the modern world has been able to devise to the ideal republic of Plato,—the old world hopes much. From the Australian character, from the sanity, good-humour, sincerity, and uncommon common sense which are the birthright of the Australian people, England especially has much to learn and to expect.

Perhaps it may seem bold to say 'to learn.' And yet what can we say?

Here in England thousands of children are daily driven fasting to school; and underpaid and overworked schoolmasters toil themselves out in the hopeless task of superimposing full brains on empty stomachs. Australians have their faults; but children do not starve in the New Nation.

Here in England thousands of wretched men and women are kept as paupers in prison barracks known as workhouses, a patient life of toil rewarded by separation of husband and wife, parents and children, and comfort inferior to that of felons in many county gaols. Australians have their faults; but they do not force such degradation on their old people. The states, by awarding moderate pensions to old age, do away with the necessity of the poor-house, preserve family integrity and national self-respect.

In England we still discuss with Aristotle whether women have souls. In Australia they have votes, and thus receive part of their rights

of equal citizenship to which Plato thought them entitled.

Slaves of the counter still faint in English shops, senselessly tied to their work for fourteen hours a day. In Australia, we have seen, shops close at reasonable hours; all employees have hope of reasonable leisure.

In England we have journals annually degenerating to the American gutter type; in Australia the daily papers have learned the art of being popular without the tricks that mark the decay of English journalism.*

Lastly, in England we have a population five-sixths of which is miserably poor; we potter about at futile philanthropies, and organize conferences to discover how many starve every week in each street in London or in York,—describing pitiful figures indeed with cross-bones and skulls. In Australia the poor are still with us; but the doctrine of the living wage has been

* It is nowadays unnecessary to describe Australian papers to English readers. Are not their files visible any day in Fleet Street at the London branches of their offices? The *Melbourne Age* and *Argus* are usually considered the ablest of the Australian dailies, the *Sydney Morning Herald* the richest, the *Daily Telegraph* the most emphatic. All exhibit something of the decorum which until recent years used to characterize English journals of the better class. Nowadays, when the leading Liberal journal breaks into hysterical capitals over the "Caperings" of the children of a supposed murderer, while what used to be the most refined of Conservative evening papers adorns its detailed account of an ugly divorce case with the heading, "Tea on the Edge of the Bath," it is hard to know what to think.

taken from the books into the workshops, so that the majority of artisans have long been assured of the wherewithal to support their wives and rear children healthy and competent to play their part in the industrial and social life of the New Nation. The strikes which are a hideous feature in English industrial history are, thanks to Arbitration Acts, as extinct in Australia as are ordeal by fire, the torture-chamber and other English institutions once considered as indispensable as strikes are now.

"But these things," it will be said, "are but experiments. They may fail. Australia may herself suffer, in another way than England, as a pioneer of progress."

They are indeed experiments. For their complete success Australia must add to the benevolence of character that she has shewn in making them, and the common sense she has shewn in carrying them out, determination of character to give them a fair trial in spite of the opposition of reactionaries within and without the Commonwealth. The next few years must be a time of some unrest. There will be stupid provincial attempts to wreck the federation (as there were in the United States and Canada); there will be despairing attempts of vested interests to reusurp their ancient way; and both will adopt specious titles, and be misunderstood, and supported, in England.

But I do not think that any one who knows his Australia will doubt that the sterling merits of character of the Australian people will bring it victorious from its trial. If, remembering the danger, knowing the power of the foes of Federal Democracy, I am ever inclined to hesitancy, I have only to turn my memory back to one of the spectacles witnessed by the Prince and Princess of Wales during their visit to the Commonwealth. The scene was the finest amphitheatre in the world,—the Sydney cricket ground. Round it, ranged tier on tier, sat the fathers and mothers of the people, twenty thousand of them, happy, healthy, hearty men and women, sober, self-reliant, tolerant; no tears, for smiles are easy; no rags, for cotton is cheap; no dirt, for water is plentiful. And, in the centre, ten or twelve thousand boys and girls, children of the primary schools, dancing the may-pole dance, swinging clubs and dumb bells, drilling in complex figures, thousands moving as one. Who could look into the faces of those happy, vigorous children, orderly, self-restrained, intelligent, comely in their cadet-corps uniforms and pleasant cotton dresses, fearless and strong,—who could see those thousands of young firm lips and honest, fearless eyes, and not have perfect confidence in the future of the Australian national character?

CHAPTER XIII

THE CASE FOR SEPARATION

SOME three years ago, before any whisper of the South African war had reached our ears in Australasia, on the occasion of a generous offer from New Zealand of troops to quell a grave disturbance in Samoa,—New Zealand being that part of the Empire from which men could be most speedily despatched to the locality in question,—the author ventured, in the columns of the *Daily Chronicle*, to criticise the home authorities for their discourtesy in completely ignoring the offer for ten days, before they unceremoniously refused it. I pointed out that colonial loyalty depended largely on imperial conduct during the next few years, and while assuring Englishmen that proper treatment would make the Australian colonies among the loyallest parts of the Empire, I also stated my belief that a continued policy of 'snub' might work irrevocable harm. My letter was made by the *Chronicle* the basis of a leading article, and occasioned some small comment at the time. Whether it arrived at its destination, the ears of the Colonial Secretary, I have, of course, no

means of ascertaining. But in common with all Englishmen in Australasia, I rejoiced to see that when some months later, New Zealand, among the first of the colonies, forgetting her recent snub, volunteered a contingent for South Africa, a courteous answer was promptly vouchsafed. Though coupled with an unfortunate remark as to the preferability of infantry to mounted men, the affirmative answer directly led to an outburst of imperial feeling which Australia and England will for a long time be proud to remember. Volunteers pressed forward; the pluck, endurance, and self-reliance they exhibited during the warfare of the veldt won universal admiration. Australia was vain of her first entrance into the tourney of the nations, and for the time was loyaller to England than England to herself.*

* In England the 'pro-Boer' was, no doubt, a small minority; but he was influential, and had powerful organs through which his views were expressed. In New Zealand and Australia the 'pro-Boer,' unless he concealed his opinions from prudential motives, was likely to be deprived of his livelihood. Positions in Government offices were lost for no other reason; and on, at any rate, one occasion the pro-Boer member found himself turned out of the night express in the midst of a trackless waste. No Australian daily paper was found to tolerate the Boer side, or even so much as print facts or arguments that might conceivably imply doubt of the justice of the British cause. The average Englishman had at least a chance of reading both sides of the case. The average Australian had not. The *Bulletin*, indeed, with characteristic courage, took the unpopular side, and is generally understood to have suffered, for the time, very severely in circulation. The music-halls found the patriotic song the one sure path to success.

Passions do not last long. There are already signs of reaction. It must be remembered that Australian loyalty of the exuberant type is a plant of comparatively recent growth. It is only a few years since the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* was 'writing up' separation with all the ability and enthusiasm that that journal now devotes to imperialism. One at least of the Australian Chief Justices is a convinced separatist, looking to America, and not to England, for light and leading; and others in high places differ from him less in opinion than in courage. Australia is nearer to America than it is to England both geographically and, at any rate since the adoption of the Federal Constitution, politically. Melbourne has at least as many points in common with Boston as it has with London, many more points in common than it has with York or Manchester. England's partial adherence to a superannuated fallacy is filling Australian shops with American instead of English goods. Even the maps by which Australians learn to read the countenance of the country of their fathers are made in America.

The South African war, great as it has been in its immediate effect in cementing the Empire,

Regiments of 'street arabs' paraded the streets with ragged Union Jacks and very literal kettledrums. I remember hearing even a little Japanese maiden, at the door of a shop in Lower George Street, chanting with the quaintest lisping enthusiasm :

" Sons of the sea, all Blitish born."

has not been entirely free from results which might exert an influence in the opposite direction.

Many of the Australians have come back with a good-humoured contempt for the 'Tommies,' and the conviction that they themselves were infinitely the best troops on the British side. From the continuous eulogies they have received from imperial officers it would seem that this opinion is not wholly unwarranted. However, its truth does not concern us here. The point of importance for us is that its wide acceptance among Australians is likely to create an independent temper, a self-confidence and a national pride, which are new factors for England to reckon with. It can hardly be doubted that this national spirit will be fostered by federation. Loyalty was more a matter of course with six colonies united only through the mother-country, than it will be with six states combined into one homogeneous nation.*

Nothing, if not practical, the Australian must be excused for sooner or later asking himself the candid question: What does Australia gain from remaining a part of the Empire?

* The very word 'loyalty' really in a manner begs the question. For it has acquired a moral signification. No one would like to be called disloyal. But the 'young Australian' may have to decide between loyalty to England and loyalty to his own country. To be loyal to the one may conceivably involve disloyalty to the other.

"I am told," he will say, "in the first place, that we gain the privilege of defence from external foes,—protection by English arms.

"But," he will add, "the prolonged Boer resistance has proved the enormous advantage on the side of the defenders of a country like ours. No nation is likely to attack us. And our remaining a part of the Empire exposes us to the hatred of European Powers far more than would our independence. As an independent nation, we might rely on a dozen allies; as a part of the British Empire we share Britain's universal unpopularity, and are in danger of being drawn into all her quarrels." *

* Some slight expression of this sentiment has, since the above was written, found vent in the controversy occasioned by Mr. Barton's promise on behalf of Australia, to increase the Commonwealth's contribution to the Imperial Navy. Without denying the general fairness of some such increase, we may yet marvel at the infelicitous time selected for its demand, with Australia writhing under the most disastrous of her droughts, and faced with the economic difficulties which are a necessary prelude to the benefits of federation. The Australian Premier has thus found his proposal for increase met with strong opposition throughout the Commonwealth. "In the first place," Australians say, "if Australia declared independence to-morrow, England would not reduce her fleet by one. The fleet is kept up at its present standard because it is necessary to England. The first duty of Australians is to develop their country, and England will reap more good from their so doing than from wringing from them an unpopular subsidy." In the second place, most Australians look forward to an Australian fleet, manned by Australian sailors, and offering a career to Australians. It may be quite true that current theories of naval defence are in favour of concentration, and against scattered local fleets. But the aspiration to a small fleet of their own is, after all,

Being inclined, therefore, to discount the argument as to defence, he will continue his investigation of what Australia gains from her tie with England.

"I am told," he will say, "in the second place, that she is given a Governor from home (whom, by the way, she pays handsomely for his services)* to control the legislation, and to set the tone to colonial society."

"But," he will add, "I find that his political duties are practically non-existent; while it seems questionable whether his social activities do not do more harm than good. I find that Government House in all the colonies is the centre of snobbery and social jobbery that make it a laughing-stock to self-respecting citizens, even those who are in a manner obliged to attend its 'functions.' But even admitting, which I cannot do, that the Governor on his social side discharges useful duties, and does not, as he seems, merely perform

a very natural one. How would England like to be defended entirely from Australia?

* When we consider that the colonies are each of them paying salaries to a state Governor from England, we must surely admit that the £10,000 a year assigned the national Governor under the Constitution, is a very generous allowance. Australia was genuinely sorry to lose Lord Hopetoun, and certainly did not anticipate that his resignation would have been the result of her refusal to increase his salary to meet special expenses. But, in the face of the terms of the Constitution and the condition of the country, it is hard to see what other conclusion she could have arrived at.

the ignoble rôle of a pivot on which the fast 'set' moves, adding the cachet of imperial approval to the prevalent plutocracy,—I cannot for the life of me see that the imperial tie is worth maintaining on account of his society usefulness. Society, as Bagehot has pointed out, is in its essence aristocratic, not monarchic. Whether birth or culture, as formerly, or wealth, as is now for the time increasingly the case, be the criterion of social worth, 'society' consists of as many families as are worthy according to that criterion, and is not dependent upon any one person as its head. There seems reason to think that Australian society would be in at least as satisfactory a condition as at present, if Governors ceased to be appointed from England."

When he arrives at this point, our Australian will find some difficulty in receiving any definite answer as to further advantages of the imperial connexion. He will, however, finally be informed that by maintaining the 'silken bond,' Australia secures for some of her sons careers in the army and navy and civil service that would otherwise be closed to them. But he will find that these privileges are somewhat illusory, being coupled with conditions that allow very few to avail themselves of them. "You offer us commissions in the army," he will say, "but only to be socially ostracized if we accept them. Besides, the unnecessary expense in red tape and gold braid is so large that most

colonials who are offered them are obliged to refuse."

Further benefits said to be derived from the imperial tie, such as the keeping in touch with all that is best in English literature and art, the Australian will be shrewd enough to perceive are in no way dependent upon a political connexion. Can he, then, be blamed if, all things considered, he fails to see that his country gains aught worthy of mention by remaining a portion of the Empire? His confidence that his view is right will be strengthened by the history of America. Would America, he will ask, ever have been the great and individual nation she is to-day had she been content to remain for ever in Britain's leading-strings?

The Englishman of imperial sympathies will be wise to admit that the separatist ideal may be made a high one. I would personally go so far as to say that it seems to me that there is comparatively little to choose in theory between the highest form of national and of imperial developement. The page of History is written in indelible ink, and not all the national feeling in the world can make Australia other than English, —English in her views of life, her political ideals, English in her language and literature. The oak or the briar may under southern skies grow dwarfed or luxuriant; they can never be aught else but oak and briar. The infancy of nations,

as of individuals, is the real moulding-time of character, and Australia, even if she ever wished to, can never unlive her first century.

There are certain points of view from which separation, when fairly considered, must seem to offer the readiest means to national welfare.

There is no need to press the language that the more radical among Australians use towards the institution of Government House; but clearly there is something anomalous in a community essentially democratic, organized on a commercial and not an aristocratic basis, importing an aristocrat and paying him to ask them to social functions, which bore the entertained as much as the entertainers, and yet excite an amount of heartburn and petty jealousy inconceivable to those who have not seen something of the struggle for invitations.

Under separation it is at least possible that worthier social ideals might be evolved. The destruction of unworthy idols may be a good thing, even if in their place we can erect only an altar to an unknown god.

Again, the 'colonial fallacy,' referred to in an earlier chapter, though not, in the opinion of the writer, any necessary implication of the imperial tie, yet would clearly receive an immediate death-blow from separation. We may be quite sure that very little time would be suffered to elapse before an independent Australia had at least a

magazine of her own, a national school of music, a national theatre.

However slight the tie is that binds Australia to England, yet, so long as that tie subsists, Australia must be provincial; so long as that tie subsists, the intellect, the wealth, the beauty of Australia, will tend to flow to London, and stay there. Admirable in intention as are the colonial scholarships of Mr. Rhodes, and great as seems the ability of the Commissioner in whose hands their arrangement has been placed, it is at least doubtful whether their result will not be an increase of the centripetal tendency which is the necessary consequence of the imperial connexion. If Australia could ill spare the legions of her bravest and most daring sons who left her shores for South Africa, from which they will in so many cases never return, she can spare still less the most intelligent of her sons who will henceforward be drawn from her struggling universities to swell the crowded halls of the ancient centres of learning. If the scholarships could be awarded at the close of the career at a colonial university, and only awarded on condition of partial refund of the monies unless the successful scholar returned to his country on the completion of his course, good and not evil might come from the characteristic bequest. Otherwise, Australians may well look somewhat doubtfully at a gift which deprives their country of her ablest scholars, without any adequate return.

By the severance of the imperial tie, it cannot be denied that the centripetal tendency would receive a severe check.

Again, political dependence undoubtedly dulls the sense of moral responsibility. So long as Australia is subject to England, so long, to some extent, England is the keeper of her conscience. So long as the imperial tie subsists, Australia will not fear the consequences of her actions; she will look to England to help her out of any difficulties,—English money, and English brains. This dependence is not good for the character of a nation: to be self-reliant means to be brave, to be cautious, to be strong; and for my part I cannot pretend to view except with sympathy the national aspirations of the young Australian party who for this bravery, this caution, this strength, are ready to sacrifice the advantages of the imperial connexion.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CASE FOR IMPERIALISM

THE alternative to separation is imperial federation. I think there is no blinking that fact. However desirable it may be to deprecate premature action, deprecate any hasty step until our mechanicians (for it is they, not the politicians, who are the real imperialists) have brought us nearer, there is no object in denying that the present condition of affairs is most certainly transitional. It cannot possibly continue: one of two things must happen: Canada and Australia must become independent nations, or they must become integral parts of the Empire.

Not only, I think, must the philosophic imperialist admit the nobility of separatist ideals, but he must also agree that the maintenance of the imperial tie depends entirely upon the feelings with which English teach the Australians to regard the Empire. If the Australians, wounded by continued indifference, stung by the snub of the snob, patronized as provincials by an ignorant English public, pleasantly chaffed as convicts' children

by underbred undergraduate governors, prefer to 'cut the painter' and take an independent course, England can raise no objection.

The moment Australia asked for independence, the British Empire would cease to exist. England has nothing to gain from the retention of Australia against her will. Australia gone, other colonies would follow suit, and England's political power and national prestige would suffer a ruinous blow. The Empire to the future historian would be but an interesting dream of Beaconsfield and Chamberlain.

If, then, the imperial bond is to be retained, it is essential that the good-will of Australia towards England should be established on firm foundations.

For that firm establishment greater knowledge, greater intercourse, greater commercial reciprocity, are absolutely essential.

The Englishman will, as a rule, be ready enough to admit this, however tardy he will be in carrying his admissions into practice.

The normal Australian, (separatists are as yet only a small minority), will with difficulty be brought to allow that any change is wanted from things as they are. He wishes to combine as long as possible the advantages of practical independence with those, however shadowy and indefinite, secured by the imperial tie. He does not realize that he thus combines also the disadvantages of both; and that

his country enjoys neither the self-reliant freedom of independence nor the glorious sense of partnership in a world-wide commonwealth.

Strongly as my years in Australia have made me personally sympathize with the nobility of Australian aspirations towards a separate national existence, I am yet inclined to think that the imperial ideal, if fairly stated, is quite as noble, and much more likely, in the existing state of the world, to yield satisfactory results. That each subdivision of the Empire should, so to speak, hermetically seal itself up from intercourse with every other, and develope its own political, social, æsthetic tendencies, uninterfered with by the outside world,—this, which would seem to be the ultimate implication of the popular motto ‘Australia for the Australians,’ was an ideal realizable in the old Greek days when mountains and seas were the impassable cradles of individuality. Now, when the ends of the earth are but suburbs of London; when the whole world comes down to its breakfast-table every morning contemporaneously to read there the same news; when every locality is rich with the spoils of every other, can we hope any longer to preserve a cloistered originality? Is it not a worthier and more feasible ambition for a nation to be prompt to apply the ‘last results of time’ to its own particular conditions, and if it be destined to achieve originality in any art or science, to prefer

to be original in full knowledge of the achievement of the world, than to purchase originality with ignorance?

'Australia for the Australians' is no unworthy ideal. It is better than the previous 'New South Wales for the New South Welshmen,' and infinitely better than the still earlier 'each for himself.' But is it a nobler ideal than 'the English world for the English people'? Is not local compatible with imperial patriotism, and is it not well to counteract the narrowing effect of the former by the breadth of a world-wide allegiance?

The 'colonial fallacy' is, I admit, a serious danger of imperialism; but the narrow-mindedness of a self-centred provincialism is an almost certain consequence of separation. Whether the day will ever come when Australia will be too large and too well developed a nation for there to be any fear of this consequence, it is impossible to say. But some generations at least must pass, as it seems to me, before the dangers of separation will not outweigh those involved in the imperial tie.

This being so, I would fain press home to Englishmen that it is on them that depends the continued loyalty of the colonies. If certain of the more thoughtful Australians begin to find a difficulty in seeing what the New Nation gains from remaining a portion of the Empire, are not Englishmen directly responsible for the difficulty? Would that difficulty have ever been felt, had Englishmen

served the English world as diligently as they have served England? If they elect by fits and starts to play the 'little Englander,' how can they be surprised at the permanence of Afrikaner and 'Australiander' sentiment?

Let English people make the colonials feel that they are brothers of Empire with them,—true-born brothers, not bastards, as is sometimes implied;—let there be the freest exchange of labour and ability between the centre and the extremities. Let England send her best men to Australia as well as receive her annual tribute of colonial ability, recognizing no artificial restrictions, no barriers, no limitations, separating the children of the Empire from each other.

With this end in view, I should like to appeal to all influential Englishmen of imperial sympathies to do their utmost towards taking practical steps to throw open, in fact and not merely in name, all professions and all vocations to all citizens of the Empire. Wherever possible, the examinations qualifying for such vocations might well be unified, and be rendered passable at Sydney or at Cape-town, at London or Hong-kong, Montreal or Wellington, as is most convenient to the student. Wherever possible; for in some there may be serious difficulties. Thus in the scholastic profession, head-masters of English public schools will probably prefer to continue to employ exclusively Oxford and Cambridge men as masters, because

nowhere else within the Empire is there any considerable attempt at the common life that is the characteristic of the English universities. Again, the local differences in legal theory and practice may cause some difficulty in pan-imperial free trade within the legal profession. But in most callings there is no reason but custom why a man should live and die 'like the coney, where he is kindled,' when the whole of the Empire lies at his feet.

It may be said that men will, as a rule, prefer the localities in which they have grown, and which they have grown to love ; and that, as it is, there is nothing to prevent men, and women too, from settling anywhere within the Empire.

The first statement is, no doubt, largely true ; but at the same time, that many from choice or necessity do leave their homes for new, is proved, if by nothing else, by the immigration statistics of the United States. And the mere fact that men do, where possible, at present elect to stay at home, in no way proves that they or the world are the happier for their choice, or that they would make that choice if the principle of free trade in ability and labour throughout the Empire were firmly established.

The truth of the second statement is more questionable. No doubt in theory there is nothing to prevent a man from living in what part of the Empire,—or for that matter, any other empire,—he chooses. Practically, in most callings, there

is a good deal. The doctor, for example, who contemplates practising in the colonies, is deterred by the fact that if he goes to Australia he will be altogether lost sight of at home, and will have great difficulty in acquiring a practice if he wishes to return. So with the lawyer. So again with the schoolmaster. How many would be ready to teach in colonial schools did they not realize the difficulty they would have in finding subsequent employment in English ones. It is the same with the clergy. As a rule the clergyman who accepts a living in Australia is burning his boats behind him. Whether his work suits him or not, he must live and die at the antipodes.

And what deters English professional men from going to the colonies, deters colonials from venturing home. It may be perfectly certain that a clever young Melbourne graduate, with a talent for teaching, would make a far better master at an English grammar school than many a member of the present teaching staffs; but how many head-masters would make such an appointment? English educational authorities, as a rule, know nor care no more about colonial schools or school-masters than about the manners and customs of the Hottentots.*

It is true that when a colonial boy from one

* "And what are colonial schools like," the applicant for a Directorship of Education was recently asked by the Chairman of the Board; "*anything like English schools?*"

of the big Sydney or Melbourne schools goes over to England, he usually, in his success in obtaining scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge, Guy's Hospital, and elsewhere, in his skill at games and in all-round ability, compares very favourably with the home-grown product. But English schoolmasters never think of that. Probably most of them would be surprised to learn that Sydney has a grammar school of six hundred boys, or that New Zealand has a dozen secondary schools under the Government, whose general standard is quite equal to that of the average grammar school at home. There is not the slightest reason in the nature of things, why, with the possible exception already mentioned, the circulation of educational labour should not be absolutely free and frequent from end to end of the Empire.

When it is realized how narrow the life and the sympathies of a teacher are apt to become, and how vitally important it is that the education of the young should be in the hands of those whose lives and sympathies are not narrow, it will be admitted that imperialism in this matter at least is desirable if possible. At some of the New Zealand high schools, for example, the majority of the masters attended, as boys, the same high school where they are now masters, proceeded for a year or two to the adjoining university college, and have then come back to teach, for perhaps the rest of their lives, at their old school. The same

is the case with many masters at grammar schools at home; they pass their whole lives within the walls of one building,—at once their cradle, workshop, and coffin. Would it not be an incalculable gain to masters and to scholars, would it not preserve from the rust of routine and keep fresh the enthusiasm of youth in a profession that above all needs enthusiasm, if a master could with no more difficulty than that involved in distance pass from teaching in Quebec to teaching in Manchester, from Melbourne or Capetown to Edinburgh or London?*

A capably managed Imperial Education Bureau† would do more for imperial unity and the peace of the world than even a succession of royal visits, which, if they generate momentary enthusiasm, are inevitably followed by reaction when the ‘tumult and the shouting cease.’ If we wish to educate our Empire, let us first imperialize our education.‡

A second step in the direction of sound (as

* What has been said of secondary education applies equally well to primary, the standard in all primary schools throughout the Empire being approximately the same.

† A modest beginning might perhaps be made by the inclusion of the leading colonial grammar schools in the *Public Schools Year-book*.

‡ The argument in relation to the scholastic profession has been dwelt upon in particular, because the desirability of imperialism herein has been impressed very strongly on the writer by his experience in teaching in England, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand. But other callings would not less certainly be the gainers from freer interchange throughout the Empire.

distinct from sounding) imperialism would, I think, be cessation of the home authorities to appoint the state governors. This innovation would probably meet with the approval of the majority of colonists. It would not perceptibly weaken the tie with England; for the Governor-General would still be appointed from home. The Government Houses in the colonies would, of course, under locally appointed governors, still be the centre of a 'society' set; but it would no longer be possible to confuse loyalty to England with admiration of their proceedings; and it would be possible to laugh at them, if one thought fit, without feeling that one was thereby encouraging disloyalty to what one valued most highly, the imperial connexion. Moreover, England having only one governor to appoint instead of seven, might be able to spare us better men than the titled nonentities she has hitherto, for the most part, thought worthy of Australian proconsular office. If the royal family is to retain its hold on the affections of the people, it might be well to send members of it, not on tourist excursions, but to acquire here some practical experience of the art of constitutional government. But if this is not possible, at any rate send us your Huxleys, your John Morleys, or Lord Roseberys, not gilded flunkeys. Surely you could spare one man of light and leading for a year or two; and such a change would work wonders for the intellectual life of Australia.

The type of man you at present send out here as governor creates a false impression on the untravelled Australian. He comes to believe that the average Australian governor is the type of the highest class, morally and intellectually, that England can produce. He then compares him with an average colonial premier, and lo! the result is not altogether in favour of the governor. Send out one of your best men, by preference a commoner, and we shall realize how little the nominally aristocratic polity really means in actual fact; how far your Mr. Morley and Mr. Chamberlain really rank above your hereditary zeros.*

A third step towards sound imperialism would undoubtedly be the securing, if at the cost of some considerable subsidy, much cheaper and better means of communication between England and the colonies. To-day, when the patriotic Australian goes to England, it is usually by a French or German boat. Why? Because Government subsidies enable these vessels to surpass in comfort and in economy the conservative English liners. Of recent years an enterprising English firm has started a line of magnificent ships, carrying but one class of passengers, with second-class

* English hereditary aristocracy is a real stumbling-block to many thoughtful Australians, as is also the excessive adulation lavished by English journals on royal persons. "Do you in England," one Australian wrote after a long course of Coronation 'leaders,' "really believe in Divine Right?"

accommodation at third-class fares (£18 to £25). Their success has been so great that the ships are now full for the return journey months before they arrive in port. Would it not be a project worthy of the new century's imperial renaissance for the British Government to initiate a similar line of steamers, not to vie with the 'White Star' line in dividends, but to bind closer the ends of the Empire? The charges might be uniform, after the analogy of the postal system. The sum of one penny will soon be enough to carry a letter from any one part of the Empire to any other. Human beings are, unfortunately, less easily portable than letters, but an uniform fare of £10 should amply suffice to carry a person, if he be not surfeited with unnecessary luxuries. If, on an Imperial Line of steamers, a £10 fare was charged alike for the journey to Cairo, to Capetown, to Quebec, to Hong-kong, to Melbourne, or to Dunedin, the comparatively short distances would reduce the loss on the long, until the annual deficit would not be thought by the British public too great a price to pay for the enormous gain in means of communication between the constituent parts of our wonderful world-nation.

And even this £10 must be remitted in the case of poorer persons desirous of finding in Australia a permanent home. The need for assisted emigration is as great as ever it was. England is overcrowded, and becomes more overcrowded year by

year. Canada, Australia, and New Zealand only need double their present population to treble or quadruple their wealth. Australia does not, indeed, want pauper clerks, nor broken-down roués, nor remittance-men of any kind ; but young and healthy artisans and servant girls, skilled mechanics,* and especially small farmers and agricultural labourers of grit and brains, with their wives,—these she has room for to any number. And by assisting such emigrants England will be not less surely assisting herself, both directly by relieving her pressure of population, and indirectly by increasing her volume of trade.†

For wisely managed emigration,—colonization,

* The recent Australian objection to the landing of English hatters has been misunderstood in England. The objection was on the ground of their coming out under contract to an employer, with, it was alleged, the object of reducing local wages. As individual immigrants, provided with some small amount of capital, they would have been heartily welcomed.

† "It seems a paradox," wrote Charles Buller in 1843, "to assert that removing a portion of your population enables a country to support more inhabitants than it could before. . . . But the assertion is as true as it is strange. Nay, we may fairly say that the emigration of Englishmen has, in the course of time, enabled hundreds to exist in comfort for every one who was formerly compelled to quit his country." Cf. Wakefield : "*When a Hampshire peasant emigrates to Australia, he very likely enables an operative to live in Lancashire or Yorkshire.* Besides making food in the colony for himself, he makes some more to send home for the manufacturer, who in his turn makes clothes or implements for the colonist." And J. S. Mill : "Colonization in the present state of the world is the very best business in which the capital of an old and wealthy country can possibly engage."

as Wakefield preferred to call it,—is twice blessed, blessing both giver and taker. And, above all, such emigration will bind closer the bonds of affection between motherland and daughterland, the loyalty of the colonies to England being matched by the loyalty of England to the colonies and to her better self.

Nothing would be easier than to enumerate other suggestions towards celebrating imperial renaissance by turning a vague idea into concrete reality; to urge, for example, the ultimate necessity of an Imperial Customs Union and the present desirability of special commercial arrangements, where possible, in the interests of pan-imperial trade, so that we should secure an *intercursus magnus* between England and all the scattered nations that form the Empire. I might detail arguments for a complete system of all English cables; and examine into the possibility of colonial examinations for the imperial civil service, the imperial army and navy.

But I have no desire to pose as having discovered any philosopher's stone to transform the brazen platitudes of politicians into the pure gold of a ring of imperial wedlock. I have no pretensions to have succeeded in finding any royal road to imperial union where so many abler minds have failed. I will therefore content myself with two further suggestions, for which I ask a hearing, not for any intrinsic originality

or brilliance, but merely as the outcome of colonial experience.

The first is the non-continuance of colonial knighthoods. These things do not matter much in England. There is an hereditary aristocracy; there are other social standards. In Australia the honours bestowed by the Colonial Office are the only exceptions to the natural equality of a democratic country. If they could be bestowed in all cases on those who are in very deed, by merit and by service, Australia's aristocracy, their retention might be defended. But awarded as they at present are to all and sundry that happen to stand most in the public eye or secure the most effective political patronage, their effect on the sentiment of some of the more thoughtful of Australians towards England is little less than disastrous. The term C.M.G., for example, suggests to most loyal subjects in New South Wales nothing in the world so vividly as 'Corner of Market and George Street,'—the site of the public-house kept by a recipient of the imperial honour some years since. If the imperial tie is to be maintained, it is in the highest degree important that it should be dissociated for ever from any connotation of social snobbery. Honours, no doubt, have often been bestowed excellently; but the numerous mistakes render it much to be preferred that they should not be bestowed at all.

The second is the substitution, for the suggested

meetings from time to time of colonial premiers and the colonial secretary, of a triennial Imperial Council. This proposed council would consist of one member from each colony, one member from north England, one member from south, one each from Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, elected on a popular suffrage.

Its functions would be at first purely deliberative and recommendatory, though the Colonial Secretary would, no doubt, feel bound in no case to ignore its advice. In time, just as we have seen a similar deliberative council develope into a machinery for securing Australian federal union, we may hope that our descendants will see this proposed council at length make possible a working scheme of imperial federation.

Of this, at least, I am certain. Englishmen should make up their minds between the two ideals of separation and imperialism. Both, when fairly stated, are not unworthy ideals; but they are inconsistent. For those who believe in separation, I have no message: their ideal is a noble one: let them pursue it faithfully. But those who believe in imperialism, both in England and in the colonies, I would most earnestly exhort, in the language of the loudest and longest voiced of our imperialists, to 'wake up.' Passions do not last long; but while they last they may be utilized to secure permanent results. The fire dies; but the link has been forged.

Recent events have shewn that there is, at the heart of English people wherever dwelling, a sentiment of strong devotion to the English name and the English cause.

It is easy to decry, easy to condemn, some of the methods of the expression of loyalty after the relief of Mafeking ; but to me, at least, that passion of enthusiastic patriotism that swept over the English world at the touch of the message-wires is nothing to be laughed at. To me, at least, the Mafeking outburst had something of a pentecostal nature ; from it I date the gift of the imperial spirit to the scattered nations of the Empire.

I shall not readily forget that afternoon, when, after weeks of waiting, the little New Zealand town of Christchurch was kindled into a wild burst of joy by the tidings that Mafeking was safe. In an instant business was suspended. Every bell clashed the news. Every house poured forth its inmates. Every heart was warm, every eye was moist. The city assembled in the cathedral square, and mingled rejoicing and praise. The whole thing was perfectly spontaneous, and, when one remembered that all this was a tribute to the pluck of a handful of soldiers from a distant northern island that few of those present had ever seen or ever hoped to see, although they called it home, infinitely touching ; a tribute to the essential imagination of our people, the essential feeling of imperial unity, a triumph of mind over space.

Similar scenes were repeated throughout Australasia. Their spontaneity and transparent sincerity were enough to convince all who saw them of the reality of colonial patriotism.

But a great moment like that must not lightly be thrown away. We may never,—I trust devoutly that we shall never,—have another war to unite us. It behoves us to utilize the sentiment of unity created by the struggle in South Africa.

The normal condition of the Empire has hitherto been that of a giant in a state of partial paralysis; without consciousness of his members, without feeling in his extremities. Occasion arises; he rises to the occasion, finds the use of his limbs,—only to sink back into lethargy. There comes a time when he can by one great effort permanently shake off his disease, and stand up in his might to face the world. If not, death and dissolution are at hand.

Or, again, we can compare it to some gigantic palace of many wings, in each of which industrious families of near relatives are dwelling, every wing heavily walled off from every other, the occupants only occasionally communicating through the windows, or by the roof, or perchance by the casual displacement of a brick in the walls. The suggestion is made that the walls should once and for all be removed, and that free communication should be opened up throughout the imperial palace. 'From one end to the other *laissez faire, laissez passer*.'

How is England going to receive the suggestion? Will she say: No, I am getting on very well within my central portion of the palace (though rather overcrowded), and I understand you are getting on pretty well in yours (though something too large for you). Let us each develop our several destinies, jealously nursing our individualities; and calling on each other, by ladder, say, once in every fifteen years.

Or will she not rather say: Down with all barriers, down with distance; down with all that interferes with imperial unity. For only in a world-wide self-conscious empire will the individual have full power to find and to do 'that for which he was made.'

APPENDIX I

THE HOURS OF LABOUR IN SYDNEY SHOPS

Report read at a Conference summoned by the Toynbee Guild on the subject of Hours of Work in Sydney Shops, and published in pamphlet form by the New South Wales Early Closing Association, September, 1898.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Before laying before you, as falls to my lot, such facts concerning the hours in Sydney shops as have been obtained by members of the Toynbee Guild in an inquiry extending over some weeks, it is advisable to say a word as to the spirit in which the Guild approaches this question.

The Toynbee Guild is an association of university men for the purpose of co-operation in social work. Consisting, as it does, of men of all shades of opinion, it is in no danger of extreme or precipitate action. There are two points, however, in which it is unanimous :—in its desire for the bettering of the social conditions about us, and zeal for the diffusion of the knowledge of those conditions which alone can render their amelioration possible.

It is in such a spirit, then, that we approach this matter of the hours of labour in Sydney shops.

Now, whether we are in favour of legislation or not, I think we are probably all agreed that the hours in Sydney shops are on the whole very much too long.

I believe that this general theoretical conviction will be

transformed into practical dissatisfaction in the mind of any one who devotes serious attention to the following particulars, which have been arrived at by no hasty generalization, but by personal inquiries in the chief city and suburban districts, in which I have been aided by Mr. Main, the secretary of the Early Closing Association (to whose kindness I am much indebted), and by several members of the Guild.

Sydney shops may be divided into three classes—

(a) Those which shut at 6 o'clock, with or without a half-holiday.

(b) Those which shut at about 9 o'clock (on Saturdays about 10.30 or 11 o'clock).

(c) Such shops as chemists', undertakers', restaurants, and fruiterers'; where the hours are even worse.

Now with class (a), it is not proposed to meddle, nor is it possible for an Early Closing Act to interfere with class (c), inasmuch as folk are apt to want feeding, dosing, and burying at all manner of inconvenient hours.

It is the central class—class (b)—that Early Closing legislation proposes to deal with.

The general conditions prevailing in these shops are very clearly expressed in a letter received by the secretaries of the Toynbee Guild in answer to their letter to the *Daily Telegraph*:—

"I have had," says the writer, who is a grocer's assistant in a central Sydney suburb, "four years' experience here, and am in a position to give you the correct state of affairs.

"We begin our day's labour at 7.45 a.m., and four nights of the week we start to close at 9 o'clock, and in doing so, the customers generally become plentiful, and we are very fortunate to get away before half-past nine. Friday night we remain open half an hour later, and Saturdays we do not start to close until 11 o'clock, and can never get away before a quarter-past eleven, and very often later than that. . . . We get two hours off for meals five days of the week, and one and a half hours on Saturday.

"Our working hours are thus, subtracting the hours 'off' for meals:—

For four days	...	...	...	...	$11\frac{3}{4} \times 4 = 47$	
Friday	...	...	...	...	...	$12\frac{1}{2}$
Saturday...	...	...	...	...	...	14
						<hr/>
Total						$73\frac{1}{2}$ per week.

But of these hours we get four hours a week off. Subtracting these, the total number of working hours comes out at $69\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week.

"This is the exact number of hours worked in the establishment in which I am employed, and we are considered one of the early shops, quite a number remaining open long after we are closed. My employer is a very reasonable man, but is compelled to keep his business open in order to compete with those who remain open as long as there is a customer to be seen on the road."

Now, it seems to me that this letter is more valuable than much rhetoric. An employee at one of the shops in class (a) tells me,—and I can well believe it,—that he feels thoroughly tired out after a day's work. His hours are approximately 42 a week.

What are we to say of those doomed to work in the immeasurably larger number of shops in class (b), of which the writer of this letter is representative, and where $69\frac{1}{2}$ working hours a week are the usual thing?

Lest it should be thought, however, either that he is exaggerating, or that the conditions in his trade or in his locality are exceptionally bad, I proceed to support his figures from other localities and other trades.

Thus, an ironmonger's in another suburb give the following figures:—

Five days of the week...	...	...	8 a.m. to	9.30 p.m.
Saturday	...	...	8 "	11 "
Total, subtracting hours off, = $70\frac{1}{2}$ working hours per week.				

A boot shop, in yet another suburb, requires $66\frac{1}{2}$ working hours a week.

Many newsagents' shops in the city are open every day from 8.15 a.m. to 9 p.m., with no hours off for meals, these having to be eaten at the counter. This yields a total of $76\frac{1}{2}$ working hours a week. My informant had been employed for three months, in the course of which he had not received a single holiday.

A master butcher, in a suburb from which I have not yet taken an instance, informed me that he and his men worked daily from 6.30 a.m. until 9 p.m., Saturdays from 6.30 until 11. One evening a week each man is off at 6. There are no hours off for meals, which are hurriedly eaten in the back room as they are ready. Subtracting an hour a day,—a liberal estimate,—for the time thus occupied in sustaining life, we arrive at a total of exactly 80 working hours a week.

The butcher in question said that he had done all he could to bring about more reasonable hours. He had succeeded in persuading three of the other four butchers in the place to close (as most Sydney butchers do) at six. The fourth, however, resolutely stood out, and none of the others could afford to shut, if he remained open. My informant, like ninety-nine employers out of every hundred one talks to, professed himself strongly in favour of an 'Early Closing measure which should close all shops alike.

An employee in a provision dealer's in the same locality gave me his hours as follows:—

Four days in the week	...	...	7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Friday ...	...	...	7 ,, 9.30 p.m.
Saturday	...	...	7 ,, 11 p.m.

He obtained one day holiday in every three weeks. Subtracting this, and two hours a day for meals, we have left a total of over 70 working hours a week. "I assure you," my informant said to me, "I would throw up the work altogether, even though I had to starve for it, if I thought I should always have to work these hours."

Now these cases I have quoted are not, unfortunately, exceptional; they are examples of the generally prevailing conditions.

The class (b) of shops, in whose interests legislation is proposed, may be roughly said to at present employ their hands from 55 up to 80 or more working hours per week.

It is not, of course, always the longest-houred shops that are the worst. "It is not the long hours," writes one shopman, "that I object to, but the late hours." A notorious Sydney establishment professes to employ its hands only 58 hours a week, and, I believe, does not actually employ them as a rule for more than 63 or 64; but the crush of business is so enormous, especially at night, the arrangements so bad, and the atmosphere so poisonous, that over its doors might well be written for the benefit of its employees, "All hope abandon ye that enter here;" though I fear even that would fail to keep away the lady in search of a bargain, *la belle dame sans merci*.

I have but to set before you facts; argument I leave to the more competent speakers that are to follow me. I must say, however, that my inquiries have firmly convinced me that the hours in Sydney shops are much more excessive than most of us realize, and that legislation is the only possible way of dealing with a state of things which reduces a large proportion of the population to moral degradation and physical ruin.

The objections I have met with are mainly these—

(1) There are so many people worse off than shop assistants. Why aid them especially?

(2) The matter can be better done by individual than by governmental action.

(3) Compulsory early closing would be to the detriment of suburban shops, whose present chance is that they are open when the large town houses are shut.

As to (1). It may be true that there are more crying grievances to right than those of the shop assistants. But there seems to me no case in which the evil is so utterly unnecessary and so easily removed by state action.

As to (2). We have the emphatic testimony of every one who has worked for the cause. "We find," I was told over and over again, "that we are utterly helpless without legislation." The vast majority of employers are undoubtedly favourable to early closing, but in every district are to be found men who will never close their shops unless obliged to by Government. A prominent Sydney shop owner is known to have declared outright that he would not close his shop early even if Jesus Christ came down from heaven and asked him to do it. I cannot congratulate the gentleman in question on the felicity of his imagery,—his being about the last shop one would think likely of celestial patronage,—any more than on the fervour of his religion; but I give the statement as an instance of the spirit which only legislation can check. And, after all, why fear necessary legislation? Is it because it is thought to imply the tyranny of the majority? Yet, even so, it is surely preferable to the present state of things under the golden British rule of go-as-you-please, which in this case means, as you see, a tyranny of the minority.

(3). As to the third objection, the possible harm such a measure would do to suburban shops, I must confess that this objection was admitted by a shop manager with whom I had considerable talk, and who was himself in favour of an Early Closing Bill. I have, however, found other suburban shopkeepers who do not regard legislation as likely to have this effect. Alderman W. F. Latimer, in his interesting letter, which has been read this evening, suggests, as we have heard, that suburban shops should remain open until half-past six, instead of six; and if that would constitute any advantage, it would readily be conceded by those interested in the movement.

I cannot close this brief statement without a hasty reference to the shops in class (c), though I know how difficult they are to deal with.

The hours in this class are really nothing short of appalling. Thus a certain sweet-shop in George Street,—and it is merely a

type of its class,—which is open daily from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., Sundays 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., thus yielding a total, after subtracting hours for meals, of no less than 87 hours a week.

I do not think that any self-respecting people ought to be willing to tolerate, nay, encourage, the outrageous hours which the fruiterers, (who for some occult reason are, I believe without exception, compatriots of Dante), work in Sydney.

An assistant at one of these shops tells me his hours are daily from 6.30 a.m. until 12 o'clock at night, sometimes until 1 o'clock. Once a fortnight he is off from 4 p.m. until 9. After subtracting 14 hours a week for meals (which I do not at all think he gets), this yields the amazing total of 106 *hours a week, or an average of over 15 working hours a day.*

Hours similar to this obtain in every fruit-shop in this city; and the hours in many restaurants are almost as bad.

I have now discharged my duty in bringing before you the facts of the case. I might have multiplied instances, but there seemed no object in wearying you with the repetition of figures virtually identical. That the figures I have given are really typical, any one can very easily ascertain for himself.

In conclusion, I will say that in questioning employers and employees on the subject, I made a point of asking their opinion as to what form the proposed legislation should take.

In accordance with their replies, I think that a measure would be most generally accepted which closed all shops (except the exempted shops of class (c)), whether working employees or not, at 6 o'clock every evening, except Saturday, when they may remain open until 10 p.m., and Wednesday, when they must all close at 1 o'clock.

Whatever day be selected for the half-holiday, I am sure that it ought to be universal, and not one in one municipality, another in another.

In favour of Saturday being the day for the half-holiday is the fact that several large firms already close on that day, and that to make another day a compulsory half-holiday would

probably have the effect of making those shops reopen on Saturday afternoon.

As to the argument that there is little amusement to be obtained on a Wednesday as compared with a Saturday afternoon, there can be no doubt that if Wednesday were made a universal half-holiday in shops, the amusement of the large masses of people thus set free would soon be catered for.

Finally, while not in favour of jeopardizing the success of any Early Closing measure by clauses in favour of the exempted shops of class (c), I do strongly believe that some attempt should be made to ameliorate the abominable conditions therein obtaining, and venture to suggest that it should be made illegal in those shops exempted from the Early Closing Act for any one not the actual sole proprietors of the business to work for more than 10 hours on any one day, or 70 in any one week, or on more than 26 Sundays in the year.*

I do not feel satisfied with this suggestion—the regulation of individual hours being notoriously difficult and capable of evasion,—and I hope to hear better proposals put forward this evening. But I think that even its adoption would tend to minimize the great evils under which a large class of our fellow-citizens are at present suffering.

* No provision to relieve conditions in class (c) is included in the Early Closing Act of New South Wales, which in other respects roughly follows the outlines of reform above suggested. But some such provision may be confidently expected from future legislation.

APPENDIX II

A PLEA FOR ENGLISH LITERATURE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Being the substance of a Paper read before the Australasian Science Association (Education Section) at Hobart, January, 1902.

A COMMUNITY can never attain the Platonic ideal of justice, each man doing that for which he is best fit,—which, I suppose, corresponds to the Christian ideal of duty, each man making the best use of the ‘talents’ entrusted to him,—until every child in the state receives as much education as he requires, if he is to render to the community the most efficient work of which he is capable.

Now, of whatever other parts a right education consists,—and a right education for a carpenter is admittedly different from that of a Professor of Latin,—it will hardly be denied that one of the very best ways of teaching all, whether budding professors or sprouting carpenters, to think and feel, is by teaching them what the best men and women have thought and felt, set down in the best way. The record of a nation’s best thought and feeling set down in the best way is called its literature.

And to-day, in Australia, as in varying degree also in other parts of the English world, ninety-nine hundredths of the children leave school without the slightest attempt having been made to afford them this essential element of education. In secondary schools, to speak generally, the teaching of English literature is a scandal; in primary schools it does not exist.

The intelligent *advocatus diaboli*, or defender of things as they are, will probably say : "The teaching of English literature is no part of the work of schools, any more than is the teaching of the 'art of pay,' or the art of matrimony. In school the child is provided with a key, by means of which, when the force of manhood comes, he can unlock, chest after chest, the sumless treasures of the world's thought."

To which, diffident but unconvinced, I would rejoin : "Alas, you give a key that is fated to rust unused ; so ill does it fit, so difficult is it for young hands, so keen are the counter-attractions. For, no sooner have you provided the youth with the key, than lo ! he finds himself as it were in a long passage, lumbered to the right and to the left with dusty safes and boxes, the key-holes often cobwebbed and obscure. At the end of the passage, in a full blaze of light, he sees a row of female forms, veiled, but only so as to render them the more alluring. In front of them, and necessary of attainment before they can be reached, lie piles of gold, dazzling the eye, and almost blinding it to the intervening obstacles, many and wonderful, some, indeed, except by divinest chance, impassable. What likelihood is there that the youth should stay fingering with his rough key in frowsy boxes ? Will he not at once make for the half-seen obstacles that debar him from the gold and the beauty, —only to find, perhaps, when he reaches them, the beauty withered and the gold won too late to purchase him anything but an embroidered shroud ?"

And yet, could the youth but be persuaded to tarry in the race till he has taken his will with those old boxes, he would not go on without a talisman. If he would start later, he would attain more surely. The obstacles would be perchance less formidable, the eye keener with which to pierce the veils ; and he would bear with him the true philosopher's stone, transmuting the noble-seeming gold to the base metal which it really is, unless alloyed with contemplation and 'infinite heart's ease.'

Far be it from me to advocate the thrusting of elaborate

literature manuals into the overcrowded curriculum of overcrowded Australian schoolrooms. The cramming of literature hand-books for examination purposes seems to me about the least worthy employment of time that could well be contrived. And even if it were advisable, it would clearly be impossible to cram the lower classes of primary schools in the way in which it is unfortunately possible to cram the higher classes of secondary schools.

My suggestion is much more modest. It is merely that in all classes, except quite the lowest, an hour a week should be devoted in primary schools to a very brief talk on the life and times of such of the great writers as are most suited to the purpose, followed by the reading aloud by the teacher of such passages from the chosen author as seem most likely to catch the children's attention, stimulate their imagination, and form their character. At the end of the lesson might perhaps come one or two questions, as a test at once of the attention of the children and the success of the teacher's efforts; and for the next lesson the name of the book, its author, the place of his life, and the date of his death,—nothing else,—might perhaps be committed to memory by the class.*

Thus young children would be told the story of the life and times of Æsop (and here a little fable may be surely allowed concerning the father of them), of Hans Andersen, Defoe, Charles Kingsley, "Lewis Carroll," George Macdonald, and Rudyard Kipling. Then they would hear, and if I know anything of children, would hear with delight, the best of the *Fables*, the *Fairy Tales*, a chapter or two from *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Water Babies*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *At the Back of the*

* There are, of course, in existence many good reading-books, containing passages from classical English authors. But these do not cover the ground of the suggestion in the text. With them the extracts are the main thing: the authors' names are only mentioned incidentally. In the suggestion of the text the authors' names are made the main thing; and the passages are chosen to illustrate the authors, and so unconsciously to familiarize children with their names and times, and ways of thought and expression.

North Wind, and the *Jungle Book*, read them week after week as the literature hour came round.

An older class of children would learn more of Kingsley through extracts from the *Heroes* and *Westward Ho*, which would each, I suppose, require some three or four lessons. They would find rich food for fancy in the *Arabian Nights* and *Don Quixote*. They would learn to love Shakespeare and Homer through Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* and *Adventures of Ulysses*. *Tom Brown's School Days* would give an insight into all that is best in English public school life; a scene or two from *Ivanhoe* would introduce Scott, and the shooting party from *Pickwick* would cause our youngsters always to look with proper friendliness on the name of Dickens. Thackeray's *Rose and the Ring*, Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, might all be pressed into the service, and good material might still be found in Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Gatty, and Mrs. Ewing. The early chapters of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, extracts from the *Life of Nelson*, and the *Critic*, would fitly introduce Goldsmith, Southey, and Sheridan. An incident or two from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* I know to be quite capable of interesting boys and girls. The *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Gulliver's Travels* would open for them new worlds.

Mrs. Haweis' *Chaucer*, together with the life of that most human of poets, might well afford happy subjects for a month or more; while a volume of Greek and Roman stories would familiarize the children with some of the great names without which English literature would have been impossible.

If it be maintained that even the small amount of time, an hour a week, suggested, cannot be given without sacrificing something already in the curriculum, I am prepared to meet this by suggesting the entire or partial sacrifice of history, which is at present taught in many Australian primary schools, but which as a part of literature,—the part which deals, to use the Aristotelian distinction, with 'what has happened,' not, as poetry, with the higher truth, 'what may happen,'—seems to

me, however important, less important than the whole of which it is a part.

I must confess that I have no manner of sympathy with the elaborate history lesson at present, theoretically at least, in vogue.

At the old-fashioned English schools the method of education was mainly for the boys to prepare their work out of class, and to be heard it in class. Now the tendency seems to be towards a complete abolition of home-work for the children, and its ten-fold multiplication for the unfortunate schoolmaster, required not only to provide the mental food and supervise its assimilation, but himself painfully to masticate it before cramming it into the crops of his pampered pupils.

Thus, at the end of a long day's school, the boy, who has tempered his application with a fair amount of top-spinning, marbles, nibs, philately, or whatever sport is for the time in fashion,—not to mention the great Anglo-Saxon Dioscuri, cricket and football, one or other of which is always with us,—homeward plods his way with the comfortable feeling that his duty has been either done, or at any rate left undone without serious consequences.

Meanwhile the poor drudge that is called a schoolmaster staggers home under an Atlantic load of copy-books. These corrected, at about ten, he bathes his protesting eyes, and sets himself to prepare the 'fancy' history lesson for his class that his conscience, and his chief, require. To it he devotes hours more profitably spent in sleep.

The morrow comes. The history lesson comes round. The boys sit lethargic. Few of them have prepared the work. They are not supposed to spend more than two hours over their home-work. An hour and a half of this, or a *pro rata* allowance on a lesser amount, has probably gone on mathematics; the rest has been apportioned between the other subjects. Of these, history has not been one, because, as the class will artlessly explain, "Old Joskins doesn't hear you much; he just jaws."

The weary Joskins rises to the occasion. With superhuman effort he drags before the attention of the boys the Siege of Londonderry or Wolfe scaling the Heights of Abraham. He paints painstakingly detailed and vivid pictures; flatters himself that he has brought the thing before the class's very eyes, and the net result is that he has achieved a histrionic display inferior alike in accuracy and in effectiveness to that which could be obtained for his class at the nearest theatre where a historical drama is being staged.

If his histrionic power be considerable, he may really succeed in interesting a few of the boys for a few minutes. But this result is, it seems to me, out of all proportion to the labour by which it is attained. The leisure of the master is as precious and essential as that of the schoolboy; and a more permanent and valuable result will, I believe, be attained if, treating history as a part of literature, the teacher is content to have the necessary dates, and a few of the bare outlines, committed to memory, and supplements them by a well-chosen reading from Macaulay, from Froude, from Green, or from the pages of a contemporary historian. We do not so much want history, any more than we want other literature, taught in our schools; what we do want taught is that love of literature, imaginative and historical, which alone can lead the child to co-operate in his education. It is less the administering of information than the securing of the right attitude of the young mind towards knowledge, that we should expect of our teachers.

Thus I would rather have a boy with some sound knowledge of his main history dates and outlines, who had been imbued with enough love of his subject to read for himself the accounts of battles, murders, and sudden death that fascinate most of our young barbarians; or, if he be of more philosophic mould, of the struggle for the Charter, the musings of Sir Thomas More, the liberal methods of Walpole, the dreams of Wakefield, than our usual modern clever boy, facile of memory, impotent of thought, sterile of imagination,

calculated automatically to reproduce at a few hours' notice the fancy pictures of (more or less) historical scenes and characters, derived from the unnecessary toil of his jaded schoolmaster.

For goodness' sake let us stop this masticating business! Let us teach our young bird to peck for himself betimes. He will be all the hardier, and we less weary.

The reformer in any field is faced by the fear of that dread word 'fad.' Thus one of the best and best known of Australian schoolmasters has put his veto on the proposed reform of primary education in his colony by saying that more was to be feared from the faddists than from any other quarter. Now it comes to this: are we going to be deterred by the use of this dread vocable from pressing forward for reform? Or shall we not rather be encouraged to find, as we look back through history, that every reformer was at first despised as a faddist by common-sense fellow-citizens. Socrates was a faddist, Christianity was a fad, the steam-engine was the maddest faddery. The faddist is but the reformer who is thought unlikely to succeed; and the word 'fad' as an opprobrious mud-missile is likely to leave a longer stain on the hands of the thrower than on the forehead of his friends.

After all, whether we are likely to succeed or not depends in large measure on ourselves. If we are in earnest in our belief that Australian primary education requires reform, that this reform is the most crying need in the Australia of to-day, that there are certain directions that reform must take; smaller classes, better-educated educators, a wider and wiser course of study;—there is no doubt that sooner or later, though perhaps not in our time, we shall be successful, and our fad will have become what the newspapers will call "an almost axiomatic principle of educational common sense." For the buds of common sense are fads.

As for the particular point of reform advocated in this paper, I am well aware that exception may be made in detail by those who mistake experimental definiteness for impertinent

dogmatism. It has not been my intention to lay down any one scheme suitable for all cases. On the contrary, I would leave the utmost possible liberty to the teachers to use what method they find most useful and congenial. But as to the desirability of teaching literature in our primary schools, I hardly think there can be any real difference of opinion among those who realize the present state of our national taste.

For in truth Demos as Macænas cuts but a sorry figure. And this is as sad for Literature as it is for Demos.

What the popular taste was, from the standpoint of literature, mattered comparatively little in Horace's or in Spenser's day, when the general public did not read, and literary men were supported by a cultured minority. Now, when the general public does read, and when we buy books to read not because they are recommended by the Dr. Johnsons of the day, but because fifty thousand other people have read them, it does matter very much to literature that the public taste should be sound and healthy.

How far it is from this is proved, perhaps, most clearly by the success of a notorious female writer, whose works consist, in about equal proportions, of offences against all decency in art, in taste, and in the rudiments of English grammar. Her rubbish, in spite of all self-respecting critics, has achieved colossal fame and fortune; while the creators of Sir Willoughby Patterne, the Mayor of Casterbridge, and Daisy Miller, peep about beneath her shadow 'to find themselves dishonourable graves;' Shakespeare, seldom produced in England except as a clothes'-prop, plays in Australia to half-empty houses; and Fielding, Scott, Thackeray, and Jane Austen are only saved from oblivion by a small band of zealots who contrive to keep the laurel green upon their sepulchres.

If we consider the great literary successes of the past decade, *Trilby*, *In His Steps*, *The Christian*, and the *Master Christian*, can we doubt that the unformed tastes of the ex-primary-school children have been mainly responsible? They

had dimly heard of the gay student life of Paris. *Trilby* introduced them to the Quartier Latin; discovering the French of Paris to the schools of Stratford-atte-Bowe. They had been taught nothing of the Bible in their secular schools. *In His Steps*,—a third-rate sermon disguised as a fourth-rate novel,—introduced it to them on its most attractive side. The success of *The Christian* and the *Master Christian* was mainly due to glaring colours and melodramatic vulgarities; their authors deliberately writing down to a public whose untrained taste could be most easily reached by the 'poster' in art and in literature.

What else can be expected, when the children who grow up to form our reading public leave school without so much as learning even the names—let alone the love—of the leaders of our race in thought and fancy; and possessed by the pernicious fallacy that anything between covers is a book?

I remember a youth fresh from a New Zealand primary school, who was called upon to explain the line:

"Oft have I travelled in the realms of gold."

"This," he began, quite rightly, "does not mean going to West Australia. It means reading *the great English authors like Homer, Gertie, and Guy Boothby.*"

This boy had an acquaintance with literature far superior to that of the average child in our state schools.

Are we content that this scandal should continue? The remedy is with us. The disgrace, if we neglect to use it, is with us too. Let us insist on having some provision made in all primary schools for familiarizing the children's minds and hearts with those rare spirits whose better selves deposited in their works are indeed 'more golden than gold,' and we shall have a good time coming for the nation and for the national literature. Our punishment will be the name of 'faddist;' and our reward will be the rise of a clean and healthy school of Australian literature, true to Australia, true to England, and true to truth.

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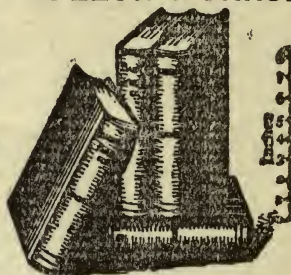
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